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Charles Lamb
1819.

LETTERS

OF

CHARLES LAMB

EDITED WITH PREFACE

BY

WILLIAM MACDONALD

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY HERBERT RAILTON
AND PORTRAITS

VOLUME TWO

LONDON
J. M. DENT & CO.
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.
1903

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CONTENTS

PAGE

EDITORIAL PREFACE TO THE LETTERS XV

BOOK IV.—1821-1827

THE ELIAN ERA

CHAPTER I. RUSSELL STREET AND RURAL FLIGHTS. Jan. 1821—Aug. 1823 . . 1

CHAPTER II. COLEBROOK ROW—AND THE FLIGHT FROM LEADENHALL. Sept. 1823—April 1825 63

CHAPTER III. 'TWIXT ISLINGTON AND ENFIELD—UNEASY LEISURE: AND "THE EVERY-DAY BOOK." April 1825—Sept. 1827 117

BOOK V.—1827-1834

SEVEN LAST YEARS: THE STRUGGLE, GAIETY AMID GATHERING GLOOM

CHAPTER I. THE WHITE HOUSE AT ENFIELD. Oct. 1827—Oct. 1829 . . 194

CHAPTER II. THE LODGINGS NEXT DOOR. Oct. 1829—May 1833 242

CHAPTER III. THE ASYLUM AT EDMONTON: AND THE GRAVEYARD THERE. May 1833—Dec. 1834 320

NOTES 349

INDEX TO THE WORKS CONTAINED IN VOLS. I.-X. . 365

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF LETTERS

LETTER			PAGE
CCXXXIV.	TO MARIANNE AYRTON	Jan. 23, 1821	1
CCXXXV.	TO THOMAS ALLSOP	Mar. 30, 1821	2
CCXXXVI.	TO LEIGH HUNT	— 1821	2
CCXXXVII.	TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE	— 1821	2

LETTER			PAGE
CCXXXVIII.	To James Gilman	May 2, —	3
CCXXXIX.	To William Ayrton	May 14, 1821	3
CCXL.	To J. P. Collier	May 16, 1821	3
CCXLI.	To John Taylor	July 8, 1821	5
CCXLII.	To William Ayrton	July 17, 1821	5
CCXLIII.	To John Taylor	July 21, 1821	6
CCXLIV.	Do. do.	July 30, 1821	6
CCXLV.	To C. A. Elton	Aug. 12, [?1821]	8
CCXLVI.	To Charles Cowden Clarke	—	10
CCXLVII.	To Allan Cunningham	[1821]	11
CCXLVIII.	To William Ayrton	Avg. 14, 1821	11
CCXLIX.	To Thomas Allsop	Oct. 19, 1821	11
CCL.	To Mr Hessey or Mr Taylor	[Oct. 26, 1821]	12
CCLI.	To William Ayrton	Oct. 30, 1821	12
CCLII.	To William Hone	Nov. 9, 1821	13
CCLIII.	To Thomas Allsop	— 1821	13
CCLIV.	Do. do.	— 1821	13
CCLV.	Do. do.	— 1821	14
CCLVI.	Do. do.	— 1821	14
CCLVII.	Do. do.	— 1821	14
CCLVIII.	Do. do.	— 1821	15
CCLIX.	Do. do.	— 1821	15
CCLX.	To Samuel Taylor Coleridge	Mar. 9, 1822	15
CCLXI.	To William Wordsworth	Mar. 20, 1822	17
CCLXII.	To William Godwin	May 16, 1822	19
CCLXIII.	To William Harrison Ainsworth	May 7, 1822	20
CCLXIV.	To Harwood Holcroft	—	20
CCLXV.	To Dorothy Wordsworth	[About 1822]	21
CCLXVI.	To Mary Lamb	[1822]	22
CCLXVII.	To John Clare	Aug. 31, 1822	22
CCLXVIII.	To William Ayrton	Sep. 5, 1822	23
CCLXIX.	To John Howard Payne	—	23
CCLXX.	To Bernard Barton	Sep. 11, 1822	24
CCLXXI.	To Barron Field	Sep. 22, 1822	26
CCLXXII.	To Bernard Barton	Oct. 9, 1822	27

LETTER			PAGE
CCLXXIII.	To Benjamin R. Haydon	Oct. 19, 1822	27
CCLXXIV.	Do. do.	— 29, 1822	29
CCLXXV.	To John Howard Payne	— 1822	29
CCLXXVI.	Do. do.	Nov. 13, 1822	31
CCLXXVII.	To John Taylor	Dec. 7, 1822	33
CCLXXVIII.	To Walter Wilson	Dec. 16, 1822	34
CCLXXIX.	To Bernard Barton	Dec. 22, 1822	36
CCLXXX.	To Dorothy Wordsworth	— 1822	37
CCLXXXI.	To — Dibdin, Esq.	— 1822	39
CCLXXXII.	To Charles Lloyd	[About 1822]	40
CCLXXXIII.	To Mr and Mrs Bruton	Jan. 6, 1823	41
CCLXXXIV.	To Bernard Barton	Jan. 9, 1823	42
CCLXXXV.	To John Howard Payne	Jan. 23, 1823	44
CCLXXXVI	To William Ayrton	Feb. 2, 1823	44
CCLXXXVII.	To John Howard Payne	Feb. 8, 1823	45
CCLXXXVIII.	To Bernard Barton	Feb. 17, 1823	46
CCLXXXIX.	To Walter Wilson	Feb. 24, 1823	48
CCXC.	To John Howard Payne	— 1823	49
CCXCI.	To Bernard Barton	Mar. 11, 1823	51
CCXCII.	To William Ayrton	—	53
CCXCIII.	To Bernard Barton	Apr. 5, 1823	54
CCXCIV.	To Bryan Waller Procter	Apr. 13, 1823	55
CCXCV.	To Miss Hutchinson	[Apr. 25, 1823]	56
CCXCVI.	To Bernard Barton	May 3, 1823	58
CCXCVII.	To J. B. Dibdin	May 6, 1823	60
CCXCVIII.	To William Hone	May 19, 1823	60
CCXCIX.	To Bernard Barton	July 10, 1823	61
CCC.	Do. do.	Sep. 2, 1823	63
CCCI.	To Thomas Allsop	Sep. 6, 1823	65
CCCII.	Do. do.	Sep. 9, 1823	65
CCCIII.	Do. do.	Sep. 10, 1823	66
CCCIV.	Do. do.	[? Sep. 16] 1823	66
CCCV.	To Bernard Barton	Sep. 17, 1823	66
CCCVI.	To Thomas Allsop	— 1823	68
CCCVII.	Do. do.	Oct. 4, 1823	69
CCCVIII.	To Rev. H. F. Cary	Oct. 14, 1823	69

LETTER			PAGE
CCCIX.	To J. B. Dibdin	Oct. 28, 1823	69
CCCX.	To Thomas Allsop	[Nov.] —	70
CCCXI.	Do. do.	Nov. 7 —	71
CCCXII.	To Mrs Hazlitt	[Nov. 1823]	71
CCCXIII.	To Robert Southey	Nov. 21, 1823	72
CCCXIV.	To Bernard Barton	Nov. 22, 1823	73
CCCXV.	To William Harrison Ainsworth	Dec. 9, 1823	75
CCCXVI.	Do. do.	Dec. 29, 1823	77
CCCXVII.	To William Hone	[?Dec. 1823]	77
CCCXVIII.	To Bernard Barton	Jan. 9, 1824	78
CCCXIX.	Do. do.	Jan. 23, 1824	79
CCCXX.	To Charles Ollier	[Jan. 27, 1824]	82
CCCXXI.	To Bernard Barton	Feb. 25, 1824	82
CCCXXII.	Do. do.	Mar. 24, 1824	84
CCCXXIII.	To Mrs Allsop	Apr. 13 [1824]	85
CCCXXIV.	To Bernard Barton	[No date]	86
CCCXXV.	To Bernard Barton	[Postmark May 15, 1824]	87
CCCXXVI.	Do. do.	July 7, 1824	90
CCCXXVII.	To W. Marter	July 19 [1824]	90
CCCXXVIII.	To John B. Dibdin	July 28, 1824	92
CCCXXIX.	To Thomas Hood	[Postmark Aug. 10, 1824]	92
CCCXXX.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary	Aug. 19, 1824	94
CCCXXXI.	To Bernard Barton	Aug. 1824	94
CCCXXXII.	Do. do.	Sept. 30, 1824	96
CCCXXXIII.	To Mrs Collier	Nov. 2, 1824	97
CCCXXXIV.	To Bryan Waller Procter	Nov. 11, 1824	98
CCCXXXV.	To Miss Hutchinson	Nov. 11, 1824	99
CCCXXXVI.	To Bernard Barton	Dec. 1, 1824	101
CCCXXXVII.	To Leigh Hunt	[1824]	104
CCCXXXVIII.	To Thomas Allsop	Jan. 7, 1825	106
CCCXXXIX.	To John B. Dibdin	Jan. 11, 1825	106
CCCXL.	To Miss Hutchinson	Jan. 20, 1825	107
CCCXLI.	To J. B. Dibdin	— —	109
CCCXLII.	Do. do.	[Postmark Feb. 8, 1825]	109
CCCXLIII.	To Bernard Barton	Feb. 10, 1825	109
CCCXLIV.	To Thomas Manning	[Early in 1825]	111

LETTER			PAGE
CCCXLV.	To Bernard Barton	Mar. 23, 1825	111
CCCXLVI.	To B. W. Procter	[No date]	113
CCCXLVII.	To William Wordsworth	Apr. 6, 1825	113
CCCXLVIII.	To Bernard Barton	Apr. 1825	115
CCCXLIX.	To Miss Hutchinson	Apr. 1825	117
CCCL.	To Vincent Novello	[Apr. 25, 1825]	118
CCCLI.	To William Wordsworth	[About May 12, 1825]	119
CCCLII.	To Miss Norris	[1825]	121
CCCLIII.	To Thomas Allsop	May 20, 1825	122
CCCLIV.	To Bernard Barton	July 2, 1825	122
CCCLV.	To Samuel Taylor Coleridge	July 2, 1825	123
CCCLVI.	To John Howard Payne	[No date]	125
CCCLVII.	To Thomas Allsop	[July 1825]	125
CCCLVIII.	Do. do.	[About July 1825]	126
CCCLIX.	To William Hone	[July 25, 1825]	126
CCCLX.	To Thomas Allsop	[? Aug. 1825]	127
CCCLXI.	To Bernard Barton	Aug. 10, 1825	127
CCCLXII.	To Robert Southey	Aug. 10, 1825	129
CCCLXIII.	To William Hone	[Aug. 10, 1825]	133
CCCLXIV.	Do. do.	[Aug. 12, 1825]	133
CCCLXV.	Do. do.	[Aug. 1825]	134
CCCLXVI.	To Thomas Allsop	Thursday	135
CCCLXVII.	Do.	Islington, Sep. 9	135
CCCLXVIII.	Do.	Saturday, Sep. 1825	135
CCCLXIX.	Do.	—	136
CCCLXX.	To William Hone	Sep. 30 [1825]	136
CCCLXXI.	To William Ayrton	Oct. 1825	137
CCCLXXII.	To Thomas Allsop	Oct. 5, 1825	137
CCCLXXIII.	To William Hone	(Postmarked) Oct. 18, 1825	138
CCCLXXIV.	To William Hone	Oct. 24, 1825	138
CCCLXXV.	Do.	Oct. 25, 1825	139
CCCLXXVI.	To Thomas Allsop	Dec. 3, 1825	139
CCCLXXVII.	To Charles Ollier	—	139
CCCLXXVIII.	Do. do.	Tuesday, —	140
CCCLXXIX.	Do. do.	—	140
CCCLXXX.	Do. do.	Jan. 1826	141

LETTER			PAGE
CCCLXXXI.	To Mr Hudson	Feb. 1, 1826	141
CCCLXXXII.	To Charles Ollier	Feb. 4, 1826	142
CCCLXXXIII.	To Bernard Barton	Feb. 7, 1826	142
CCCLXXXIV.	Do. do.	Mar. 20, 1826	143
CCCLXXXV.	To Samuel Taylor Coleridge	Mar. 22, 1826	145
CCCLXXXVI.	Do. do.	Mar. 28, 1826	146
CCCLXXXVII.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary	Apr. 3, 1826	146
CCCLXXXVIII.	To Charles Ollier	[Apr. 1826]	147
CCCLXXXIX.	To Vincent Novello	May 9, 1826	147
CCCXC.	To Bernard Barton	May 16, 1826	148
CCCXCI.	To Samuel Taylor Coleridge	June 1, 1826	149
CCCXCII.	To An Editor or Publisher	June 14 [? 1826]	150
CCCXCIII.	To J. B. Dibdin	Friday, some day of June 1826	151
CCCXCIV.	To J. B. Dibdin	July 14, 1826	154
CCCXCV.	To Bernard Barton	[No Date]	156
CCCXCVI.	To J. B. Dibdin	Sep. 9, 1826	157
CCCXCVII.	To Bernard Barton	Sep. 26, 1826	159
CCCXCVIII.	Do. do.	[No Date]	160
CCCXCIX.	To Thomas Allsop	[? January 1827]	162
CCCC.	To Henry Crabb Robinson	Jan. 20, 1827	162
CCCCI.	To Thomas Allsop	Jan. 25, 1827	164
CCCCII.	Do. do.	Feb. 2, 1827	164
CCCCIII.	To C. Cowden Clarke	Feb. 2, 1827	165
CCCCIV.	To William Hone	Feb. 5, 1827	166
CCCCV.	To Benjamin R. Haydon	Mar. 1827	166
CCCCVI.	To William Hone	Mar. 20, 1827	167
CCCCVII.	Do. do.	[Apr. 1827]	167
CCCCVIII.	To his Esteemed Friend and Excellent Musician, V. N., Esq.	[Apr. 1827]	168
CCCCIX.	To Thomas Hood	[May 1827]	168
CCCCX.	To Bernard Barton	June 11, 1827	169

LETTER			PAGE
CCCCXI.	To Editor of the "Table Book"	[June 1827]	171
CCCCXII.	To P. G. Patmore	July 19, 1827	171
CCCCXIII.	To Mrs Shelley	July 26, 1827	174
CCCCXIV.	To Sir John Stoddart	[Aug. 9, 1827]	176
CCCCXV.	To Bernard Barton	Aug. 10, 1827	177
CCCCXVI.	To William Hone	[Aug. 10, 1827]	179
CCCCXVII.	To Bernard Barton	Aug. 28, 1827	180
CCCCXVIII.	To William Hone	Sep. 2, [1827]	181
CCCCXIX.	To P. G. Patmore	[? Sep. 1827]	182
CCCCXX.	To J. B. Dibdin	[Sep. 5, 1827]	184
CCCCXXI.	Do. do.	Sep. 13, 1827	184
CCCCXXII.	Do. do.	Sep. 18, 1827	185
CCCCXXIII.	To Thomas Hood	[Sep. 18, 1827]	186
CCCCXXIV.	To Bernard Barton	No postmark, 1827	188
CCCCXXV.	To Henry Colburn	Sep. 25, 1827	190
CCCCXXVI.	To Thomas Allsop	Sep. 25, 1827	191
CCCCXXVII.	To William Hone	[1827]	192
CCCCXXVIII.	To Henry Crabb Robinson	*Oct.* 1, 1827	194
CCCCXXIX.	To J. B. Dibdin	Oct. 2, 1827	194
CCCCXXX.	To Barron Field	Oct. 4, 1827	195
CCCCXXXI.	To William Hone	[? Oct. 1827]	196
CCCCXXXII.	Do. do.	[Oct. 1827]	197
CCCCXXXIII.	To Bernard Barton	— 1827	197
CCCCXXXIV.	Do. do.	Dec. 4, 1827	198
CCCCXXXV.	To Thomas Allsop	[Dec. 1827]	199
CCCCXXXVI.	To Leigh Hunt	— 1827	200
CCCCXXXVII.	To Thomas Allsop	— 1827	201
CCCCXXXVIII.	Do. do.	Dec. 20, 1827	201
CCCCXXXIX.	To Bernard Barton	[No postmark] 1827	201
CCCCXL.	To Thomas Allsop	Jan. 2, 1828	202
CCCCXLI.	To Charles Cowden Clarke	Feb. 25 [1828]	203
CCCCXLII.	To Edward Moxon	Mar. 19, 1828	205
CCCCXLIII.	To Rev. Edward Irving	Apr. 3, 1828	205

LETTER		PAGE
CCCCXLIV.	To Bernard Barton Apr. 21, 1828	206
CCCCXLV.	To Thomas Allsop —	207
CCCCXLVI.	To William Hone Wednesday, May 2, 1828	207
CCCCXLVII.	To Edward Moxon May 3, 1828	207
CCCCXLVIII.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary June 10, 1828	208
CCCCXLIX.	To Mrs Basil Montagu [1828]	209
CCCCL.	To Benjamin R. Haydon Aug. 1828	210
CCCCLI.	To Bernard Barton Saturday, Oct. 11, 1828	211
CCCCLII.	To Charles Cowden Clarke —	213
CCCCLIII.	To Laman Blanchard Nov. 9, 1828	214
CCCCLIV.	To Bernard Barton Dec. 5, 1828	215
CCCCLV.	To Edward Moxon [Dec. 1828]	217
CCCCLVI.	To Charles Cowden Clarke —	218
CCCCLVII.	To Sarah James [Dec. 31, 1828]	219
CCCCLVIII.	To Edward Moxon No date. [About 1828]	220
CCCCLIX.	To William Hone [No date]	221
CCCCLX.	To Bryan W. Procter Jan. 19, 1829	221
CCCCLXI.	Do. do. Jan. 22, 1829	224
CCCCLXII.	To Thomas Allsop —	225
CCCCLXIII.	To Bryan W. Procter Jan. 29, 1829	226
CCCCLXIV.	Do. do. [1829]	227
CCCCLXV.	To Thomas Hood [No date]	228
CCCCLXVI.	To Bryan W. Procter Feb. 2, 1829	229
CCCCLXVII.	To Henry Crabb Robinson Feb. 27, 1829	229
CCCCLXVIII.	To Bernard Barton Mar. 25, 1829	230
CCCCLXIX.	To Henry Crabb Robinson Apr. 10, 1829	231
CCCCLXX.	Do. do. Apr. 17, 1829	232
CCCCLXXI.	To George Dyer Apr. 29 [No year]	234

LETTER		PAGE
CCCCLXXII.	To Thomas Hood [No date]	235
CCCCLXXIII.	To Walter Wilson May 28, 1829	235
CCCCLXXIV.	To William Ayrton June 10, 1829	236
CCCCLXXV.	To Thomas Allsop —	236
CCCCLXXVI.	Do. do. [— 1829]	236
CCCCLXXVII.	To Bernard Barton July 3, 1829	237
CCCCLXXVIII.	To George Dyer [No date]	238
CCCCLXXIX.	To Bernard Barton Saturday, July 25, 1829	239
CCCCLXXX.	To James Gillman Oct. 26, 1829	242
CCCCLXXXI.	To Mr Serjeant Talfourd [— 1829]	243
CCCCLXXXII.	To Vincent Novello [No date]	244
CCCCLXXXIII.	Do. do Nov. 6, '29	244
CCCCLXXXIV.	To Walter Wilson Nov. 15, 1829	247
CCCCLXXXV.	To James Gillman — 1829	249
CCCCLXXXVI.	Do. do. Nov. 30, 1829	249
CCCCLXXXVII.	To Bernard Barton Dec. 8, 1829	253
CCCCLXXXVIII.	To Samuel Taylor Coleridge — 1829	254
CCCCLXXXIX.	To ?Hone—or Allsop [— 1829]	255
CCCCXC.	To Basil Montagu —	255
CCCCXCI.	To James Kenney —	256
CCCCXCII.	To William Wordsworth Jan. 22, 1830	256
CCCCXCIII.	To Bernard Barton Feb. 25, 1830	261
CCCCXCIV.	To Mrs Williams [Feb. 26, 1830]	262
CCCCXCV.	Do. do. Mar. 1, 1830	263
CCCCXCVI.	To Mrs Hazlitt [Mar. 4, 1830]	264
CCCCXCVII.	To Mrs Williams Mar. 5, 1830	265
CCCCXCVIII.	To James Gillman — 1830	266
CCCCXCIX.	Do. do. Mar. 8, 1830	267
D.	To William Ayrton Sunday, Mar. 14 [1830]	268
DI.	To Mrs Williams Monday, Mar. 22 —	270
DII.	Do. Apr. 2, 1830	271
DIII.	Do. Good Friday [1830]	273
DIV.	Do. Tuesday [Apr. 21, 1830]	275

LETTER			PAGE
DV.	To Robert Southey	May 10, 1830	276
DVI.	To Basil Montagu	—	277
DVII.	To Edward Moxon	[May 12, 1830]	278
DVIII.	To Vincent Novello	Friday [May 14, 1830]	278
DIX.	To William Ayrton	Thursday, —	279
DX.	To Vincent Novello	About May 20, 1830	280
DXI.	To William Hone	May 21, 1830	281
DXII.	To Mrs Hazlitt	May 24, 1830	281
DXIII.	To Dr Asbury	May, 1830	284
DXIV.	To Mrs Hazlitt	June 3, 1830	284
DXV.	To William Hone	June 17, 1830	285
DXVI.	To Bernard Barton	June 28, 1830	285
DXVII.	To William Hone	[July 1, 1830]	286
DXVIII.	To Bernard Barton	Aug. 30, 1830	287
DXIX.	To Vincent Novello	[Nov. 8, 1830]	288
DXX.	To George Dyer	Dec. 20, 1830	288
DXXI.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary	Apr. 13, 1831	290
DXXII.	To Bernard Barton	Apr. 30, 1831	290
DXXIII.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary	— [1831]	292
DXXIV.	To Edward Moxon	May 12 [1831]	293
DXXV.	To John Forster	[? Aug. 4, 1831]	293
DXXVI.	To Edward Moxon	Aug. 1831	293
DXXVII.	Do. do.	—	294
DXXVIII.	Do. do.	Sep. 5, 1831	295
DXXIX.	To William Hazlitt, Jr.	[Postmarked Sep. 13, 1831]	295
DXXX.	To Edward Moxon	Oct. 24, 1831	296
DXXXI.	To George Dyer	Feb. 22, 1832	298
DXXXII.	To Edward Moxon	Feb. 1832	302
DXXXIII.	To The Misses Hume	— [1832]	304
DXXXIV.	To W. S. Landor	Apr. 9, 1832	304
DXXXV.	To Miss Fryer	[? Spring, 1832]	305
DXXXVI.	To Samuel Taylor Coleridge	Apr. 14, 1832	306
DXXXVII.	To Edward Moxon	[1832]	307
DXXXVIII.	To John Forster	Friday, 1832	308
DXXXIX.	To Edward Moxon	June 1, 1832	308

LETTER			PAGE
DXL.	To Edward Moxon	[Postmarked] July 12, 1832	308
DXLI.	To John Forster	—	309
DXLII.	To Edward Moxon	Dec. 1832	310
DXLIII.	Scrap of Letter to Edward Moxon		310
DXLIV.	To Dr Asbury	No date	310
DXLV.	To Mr Dilke	[? 1832]	312
DXLVI.	To John Forster	[Jan. 1833]	312
DLXVII.	To the Printer of the "Athenæum"	[? Jan. 1833]	313
DXLVIII.	To Henry Crabb Robinson	Jan. 1833	313
DXLIX.	To Edward Moxon	—	314
DL.	To Thomas Noon Talfourd	Feb. 1833	314
DLI.	To Edward Moxon	— 1833	315
DLII.	Do. do.	Feb. 11, 1833	315
DLIII.	To William Hone	[Mar. 6, 1833]	316
DLIV.	To Edward Moxon	Mar. 19, 1833	317
DLV.	To John Forster	— 1833	317
DLVI.	To Edward Moxon	[Apr. 1833]	317
DLVII.	To Marianne Ayrton	[Postmarked Apr. 16, 1833]	318
DLVIII.	To Edward Moxon	[Apr 27, 1833]	318
DLIX.	To John Forster	Apr. 24, 1833	319
DLX.	Do. do.	May 13, 1833	320
DLXI.	To Miss Betham	—	320
DLXII.	To Mrs Hazlitt	May 31, 1833	321
DLXIII.	To William Wordsworth	End of May nearly [1833]	321
DLXIV.	To John Forster	[?Summer, 1833]	324
DLXV.	To Miss Mary Betham	[June 5, 1833]	324
DLXVI.	To Edward Moxon	—	325
DLXVII.	Do. do.	July 24, 1833	326
DLXVIII.	To Thomas Allsop	July, 1833	327
DLXIX.	To Edward Moxon	— 1833	327
DLXX.	To Mr Tuff	[— 1833]	328
DLXXI.	To Mr and Mrs Moxon	Aug. 1833	328
DLXXII.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary	Sep. 9, 1833	329
DLXXIII.	To Edward Moxon	Nov. 29, 1833	330

LETTER			PAGE
DLXXIV.	To Samuel Rogers	Dec. 1833	333
DLXXV.	To Mary Betham	[Jan. 24, 1834]	334
DLXXVI.	To Edward Moxon	Jan. 28, 1834	335
DLXXVII.	To William Hone	Feb. 7, 1834	335
DLXXVIII.	To Miss Fryer	Feb. 14, 1834	336
DLXXIX.	To William Wordsworth	Feb. 22, 1834	338
DLXXX.	To Walter Wilson	May 17, 1834	339
DLXXXI.	To John Forster	[June 25, 1834 on Postmark]	339
DLXXXII.	To The Rev. James Gillman	Aug. 5, 1834	340
DLXXXIII.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary	Sep. 12, 1834	340
DLXXXIV.	To Mr Childs	[Sep. 15, 1834]	341
DLXXXV.	To Rev. Henry F. Cary	[Oct. 18, 1834]	341
DLXXXVI.	Do. do.	[Oct. 1834]	342
DLXXXVII.	To Mrs Norris	[Nov. 1834]	344
DLXXXVIII.	To Mrs Dyer	Dec. 22, 1834	344

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Charles Lamb, from a drawing in the British Museum by G. F. Joseph, A.R.A. (Photogravure) . . *Frontispiece*

Allan Cunningham, from an engraving by J. Thomson, after the painting by H. Room . . . . Face p. 10

W. Harrison Ainsworth, from an engraving by S. Freeman, after the picture by D. . . . ,, 20

Bernard Barton, from the engraving by R. Cooper . ,, 42

Colebrook Row, Islington, from a drawing by Herbert Railton 63

Rev. H. F. Cary, from the engraving of H. Robinson, after the picture by F. Cary . . . . Face p. 94

Vincent Novello, from an engraving by W. Humphrys, after the painting by E. P. Novello . . . ,, 118

Rydal Mount, from a drawing by Cuthbert Rigby . 120

Greta Hall, from an old print 132

The British Museum, Great Russell Street, in 1829 . Face p. 160

Blakesware House, from a drawing by Herbert Railton 178

Edward Irving, from an engraving by Thomson, after the picture by Hoffman . . . . . Face p. 206

S. Laman Blanchard, from an engraving by S. Freeman, after a drawing by D. Maclise, R.A. . ,, 214

Thomas Hood, from an engraving by H. W. Smith . ,, 228

Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd, from the painting by H. W. Pickersgill, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery . . . . . ,, 242

Coleridge's Bedroom and Study at Highgate, from a water-colour drawing now in the possession of Miss Christabel Coleridge . . . . . ,, 254

Walter Savage Landor, from the engraving by W. Bewick, 1826 . . . . . ,, 304

John Forster, from an engraving by C. H. Jeens . ,, 312

William Wordsworth, from the picture by B. R. Haydon . . . . . ,, 320

The Cottage at Edmonton, from a drawing by Herbert Railton 322

Samuel Rogers, from an engraving by Henry Meyer, after the painting by John Hoppner, R.A. . Face p. 334

PREFACE

It has long seemed to me that the late Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd, Sergeant-at-Law and Justice of Common Pleas, might by no very talented devil's advocate be proved to have been guilty of the greatest folly in the literary annals of his generation —a folly, indeed, literature apart, paralleled only by that of certain folk in very early history who built their city for all time on the wrong side of the Bosphorus. He was the intimate friend, the literary executor—the biographer-designate, one might also say—of Charles Lamb; and while he had thus the call and the opportunity, he had also in a very high and happy degree all the talent and knowledge and sympathy and skill for the producing of such a biography of his friend as would have lasted, I believe, with any similar work in the English language. He had everything, except a clear perception of the uniqueness of the occasion, and of its importance, not to the world, but to him. That is why I speak of Talfourd's folly. For he was not without his share of literary ambition and, when that was gratified, of the *littérateur's* self-complaisance. Yet he threw away the opportunities of feeling great and of being happy which such an achievement would have given him, while he ran after the little triumphs of an hour and the literary acclamations which, while they last, are heard for several social yards around. He wrote his "Ion," and the name of it is remembered. He wrote among other tragedies, "Glencoe; or, the Fate of the Macdonalds," and not even the arresting sub-title

has kept it from being forgotten. The reader begins to see what I mean? The talented, the accomplished, the not unambitious Talfourd, with the opportunity offered him of a site and a subject upon which he could have built himself an endless memorial, chose to expend the main part of his powers and to rest his entire hope of remembrance upon fond but fatuous labours in a region of mirage and sinking sand. Mirage, indeed! For those forgotten tragedies were accepted for the stage, and were presented at the greatest London theatres by the greatest actors; and it may well have seemed to Talfourd that in reaping such laurels and in making his way—his social way, his way at the Bar and towards the Bench—he was engaged about the main and central business of his life and about the things which rendered him important. But the true central business of his life, and the work which would have rendered him important indeed, and permanently—the writing of such a full and perfect biography of his friend as he certainly had it in him to have written, and the production of as full and orderly and unfalsified a collection of his friend's Letters as was at that time possible — this seems never to have come before his mind in its right proportions, its true aspect. What he did in that direction was done, according to its intention and scale, with these attributions of grace and charm which the Ionic style affected so prosperously; but it was done in the spirit of a cultivated and kindly trustee who is performing, sufficiently well but not so as to sacrifice himself, a sacred duty which is understood to be a little aside from the main business, the intimate personal interests, of his life. Instead of the *magnum opus*, or at least the *opus operatum*, he produced two brilliant fragments, two exquisite pieces of plausible and perfunctory stop-gap,—and each of them was felt to be, in the most essential sense, obsolete—no longer enough, no

longer good for the time—the day after its publication. The instant that each was read the world felt that, excellent though this was, more than this was wanted. The position of those two books, consequently, is as unique as it is pathetic. They are a classic, and yet they are an impossible classic. The world cannot well, nor would willingly, let them die; and yet nobody thinks of reprinting them. They only reappear as the material built into somebody else's work. Mr Fitzgerald has shaped them into one form, and made, by dint of considerable additions, a useful biography; Mr Hazlitt has transposed and fused and expanded them into another, and so produced an excellent edition of the Letters. But neither of these books is Talfourd; still less is either of these books that absolute and unalterable "Life of Charles Lamb" which Talfourd did not write, which he ought to have written, and which nobody will ever write now as he would have written it.

What he did instead, was this. Three years after his friend's death he produced, in 1837, "The Letters of Charles Lamb, with a Sketch of his Life"—letters which were carefully selected so as to exclude the greatest and most human things, and a sketch of his life which kept his life's true character an unsuspected secret. Yet no more than this could be done at that time without a brutality from which even the vanward league of the most advanced and enterprising journalism would recoil. For Mary Lamb was still alive; and while she lived, the story of the events in which she had played so tragic a part had to be kept out of her brother's biography; and out of his letters had to be struck every passage containing an allusion to her yearly visitations of insanity—every passage, therefore, that could have told the world anything of that life-long trust on the one side, that life-long devotion on the

other, which gave that character of double singleness to the history of both, and is what we first think of now when the name of either is spoken. Other considerations there were besides which induced Talfourd to select carefully among the letters and to omit carefully this and that from the context of some of them. Wordsworth, for instance, was then alive, and many another good man for whom Charles Lamb had a sincere esteem — and for Wordsworth, indeed, an undoubted reverence—but upon whom, nevertheless, the word which came from him, in writing to another correspondent, was likely to be just what the mood of the moment, which might be a mischievous or irreverent mood, dictated. He was too quick, too subtle, and perceptive, not to see many sides and aspects of all his acquaintances; and amongst those aspects, of course, also the limitations or the absurdities, which are capital things to comment upon as one goes gaily along, but which—none knew so well as he—are no part of the main matter and do not count, though they may be gay and attractive counters enough for the momentary humourist to play with. To be sure the Ionic bias in his memorialist — the Talfourdian genius for what was well-bred, graceful, and decorous —that niceness of taste which desiderates fig-leaves and that literary accomplishment which transforms them into flowers—this, to be sure, also tended in the same direction: it was a collaborating motive. But the strength of that motive has, I think, been much exaggerated. I am inclined to consider that Talfourd had, in spite of his Early Victorianism, as much humour and as much relish as anyone who has written on Lamb since—which at this time of day is, of course, saying a very great deal.

Talfourd's more momentous and criminal sins of omission occurred after the death of Mary Lamb in 1847. In the preface to his book of 1837 he had said: "Many

letters yet remain unpublished which will further illustrate the character of Mr Lamb, but which must be reserved for a future time, when the Editor hopes to do more justice to his own sense of the genius and excellence of his friend than it has been possible for him to accomplish in these volumes." It might have been expected, and many of the inner circle of Lamb's friends must have hoped, that this promise would now have its fulfilment in a complete biography replacing the earlier sketch, and in an edition of the Letters giving the entire text, if not of all those that could be collected, at least of such of them as would illustrate the characters of the dead without breaking any bones of good men living. Instead of this, Talfourd produced his "Final Memorials of Charles Lamb: containing chiefly his Letters not before published, with Sketches of Some of his Companions." I need only consider this work here in so far as it affects the history of the Letters. Its effect was definitive and disastrous.

For if a completeness of the collection and an entirety of the text were neither of them attainable perfections when Talfourd wrote his first book, there had not been the same excuse for that very casual regard for the dates of letters and the chronological order of events by which the book was pervaded. Now in 1848 that first indefiniteness was simply reduplicated; and the resulting inconvenience was added to, above and beyond, by the operation of a very fine editorial scruple even more reprehensible than the carelessness which was the original cause of sin. Talfourd was not without a perception that the right thing for him to do, after Mary Lamb's death, was to take the subject in hand once more, expand the biography, publish in their entirety the letters which had formerly been but fragmentarily revealed, and add as many new examples as possible. But the unfortunate idea occurred to

him that to do so would be unfair to those who had purchased the "Letters, with a Sketch of the Life" some twelve years earlier, since it would be requiring these good folk either to be content with what they had got—an unfinished work and a half-told tale—or else to buy a great part of the same story twice over. The triviality of this consideration, so small and momentary when balanced against the forever-after-enduring consequence of his decision, is really astounding and calamitous. However, so he reasoned; and acting upon this reasoning he made the second book a sort of supplement merely to the first, consisting partly of new letters, but most largely of the hitherto withheld passages in the letters which had already been drawn upon. If the first book, however, contained far too few indications of exact date, and those indications far too often wrong, the second book contained generally no indications at all as to the affinities of these fragments, which of them belonged to which. The task, then, of fitting them together was likely to be a very long one, whoever should try to do it by internal evidence alone; and one may say at once that it was not in the wit of man to have done it. Probably it did not occur to Talfourd that anyone should ever wish to do it. He cared so little for such searching accuracy himself that he even gives as a single letter, with signature duly printed at the end, what is really a patch of pieces from two different letters—this in the same volume, on the same page, and with the originals before him! And of the letters which appeared piecemeal in the two books there were certain passages suppressed altogether, and not to be found in either publication. It will be seen, then, that although Talfourd had produced two books which are a kind of primary authority and have a sort of classic rank, yet he had in the main achieved a distinguished fiasco as a

biographer and prepared much perplexity and trouble for all who have had to follow in his steps.

It has seemed worth while saying so much concerning Talfourd's books, that the Reader who is not by way of being a specialist may yet be in a position to understand the nature of some of the difficulties that belong to the editing of Lamb's Letters and where these difficulties had their origin. The later history can be passed over more rapidly. Its main character may be said to consist in a continual attempt to undo that initial mischief by making the collection more complete, by restoring the full text, and by fixing the chronological position of a host of letters either undated by Lamb or the dates of them disregarded by Talfourd.

The beginning, and in some respects also the end, of effort in that direction was represented by the edition which, after passing through various hands, came to be known by the name of its final editor—namely, the Fitzgerald Edition. Its inception belonged to Mr Hazlitt—it appeared with the name of Mr Sala on the title-page—but only one volume was issued, and then apparently withdrawn. This was in 1868, just twenty years after the "Final Memorials." Two years later there was an issue, in four volumes, of the intended complete edition, which was entitled, by the way, "The Complete Correspondence and Works of Charles Lamb." The titular editor was now Mr Thomas Purnell, though, like Mr Sala, he seems to have been rather a literary man engaged to write a prefatory essay than an editor properly so-called. The Moxons, and especially Mrs Moxon (Emma Isola) had probably much to do with the collecting of the works and still more to do with the collecting of the letters. Five years later still, in 1875, the edition was taken in hand by Mr Fitzgerald, who modified it in various ways, expanded, expunged, and reissued it in the

well-known six-volume form. The words, "Complete Correspondence," it will be noticed, had the leading place in the first title of this edition, and it is in relation to the Letters that the edition—whether one calls it by the name of Hazlitt, Sala, Purnell, Moxon, Fitzgerald, or who else—is memorable and important. It represents a collation, the result of a return to the original MSS.: the one extensive and authoritative collation of Lamb's correspondence that has ever been made, based upon such immediate comparison with the original MSS. as can hardly ever again, humanly speaking, be possible. It was still possible in the late 'Sixties to get together, from a score of quarters, the main body, both as to mass and intrinsic weight and meaning, of the literature which is now prized as the "Letters of Charles Lamb"; and with the originals on the table, or with faithful copies of them, it was possible to join again those things which Talfourd had sundered and to give to the light much that he had totally suppressed. But since that time these originals have been widely scattered, and it would require preternatural talent to trace them to their present resting-places and the revenues of a small kingdom to buy them back. Some great series, indeed—the Wordsworth letters, for instance—are still an unbroken heritage of the family to which they belonged; and the Barton letters, fortunately, are in the British Museum. But the originals of the Coleridge letters have been dispersed (some are in this country, in good keeping, others are Heaven knows where), and one may say generally that the collation or text—a unique collation and a copyright text—of what is called the Fitzgerald Edition * is the one key, not that unlocks,

* It will be seen that I expressed myself carelessly in seeming to say, in my General Preface, that Mr Fitzgerald had himself made this collation. On the other hand, Mr Fitzgerald's additions to the letters numbered not 40, as Canon Ainger avers, but 112. Of

but that locks and fits together the body and system of the Letters regarded as a whole. It makes into one body and system the visible and the invisible—the letters of which the originals are extant and accessible, and those for which the originals are vanished or are far away. Thus it is in a sense the basic edition; and no edition in our immediate day, which has to dispense with the support, from point to point, of this one continuous text, can have any strength as a Complete Collection of Lamb's Letters.

The great defect of that edition, as regards the letters, was the arrangement into groups, the chronological order beginning afresh with each correspondent. This defect was amended, in different ways, in both Mr Hazlitt's edition of 1886 * and in Canon Ainger's of 1888.† Mr Hazlitt arranged the letters in one chronological series, but retained the Talfourd biography, or commentary, gloss, disquisitions—one knows not quite what to call it—but he added a great deal, and the book is fully more Hazlitt's than Talfourd's. Canon Ainger, on the other hand—working after Hazlitt—gave the letters themselves, divested of all accompaniments and encumbrances, and supplied the needful notes at the end of each volume. But his chronological order was merely that of Mr Hazlitt, with scarce a new date fixed or an error corrected. One could very

these it may be that only 40 were now for the first time printed, the others having appeared in books and magazines since Talfourd's day. At any rate, 112 letters were newly embodied in the "Complete Correspondence" by Mr Fitzgerald.

* "Letter of Charles Lamb, with some Account of the Writer, his Friends and Correspondents, and Explanatory Notes. By the late Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd. An Entirely New Edition, Carefully Revised and Greatly Enlarged. By W. Carew Hazlitt." 2 vols. London: George Bell & Sons.

† "The Letters of Charles Lamb, Newly Arranged, With Additions. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by Alfred Ainger." 2 vols. London: Macmillan & Co.

easily show that the second of these two editors had not taken much pains about this matter, and that he set his face resolutely against a certain class of correspondence which was likely to keep a faithful editor out o' bed at night, as it has kept me many a night till four in the morning. But both of these editions are valuable, and each of them is preferable to the other in some respect. Canon Ainger had some opportunities not accorded to Mr Hazlitt; but he has worked under the difficulties that belong to a position of great social and moral importance, and has, consequently, sacrificed Lamb to considerations that are, to say the least, a little special and personal. What I mean will reveal itself to anyone who will compare the true text of the Dibdin letters, now for the first time given to the world, with the version of them to be found in the Eversley Edition—where we have what remains of Lamb's private correspondence after it has been submitted to what one has no choice but to call an ecclesiastical censorship of wit and humour. Those particular letters—the Dibdin letters—are not in the Hazlitt Edition, but comparison in other parts of the correspondence reveals there, as one might expect, a franker text than in the later book. However, both books, as I have said, embody an invaluable improvement, and I have myself used either—generally whichever lay nearest my hand—for the references which I have had to make to the letters in the course of my own task and labour. It only remains now that I should say something of the principles by which I have been guided in the performance of my task and what is the particular profit—to the students of Lamb—resulting from this latest piece of hackwork.

The first of these principles—the leading aim, I ought rather to call it—was the making as Comprehensive a Collection of Lamb's letters as possible. The reader will not need to be assured that that has

been my wish, nor will he need to be assured of the wisdom of it. He is already, I take it, a "zealous convertite" of that Elian creed, whereof the first article has been formulated in certain famous words about "one grain or one drop more from the siftings of his granary or the runnings of his well." We have gone too far towards making the personal acquaintance of Charles Lamb—an acquaintance of unexampled closeness and unequalled variety and interest and human charm—to be willing to slight any smallest opportunity of knowing him a little better still. Every notelet is, as it were, a few words more—words from lips of which all the words are numbered—caught and withheld from the universal drift towards extinction and forgottenness. On this topic, however, it is needless to speak. Suffice it that this edition has prospered so far in its leading aim that the reader is here put in possession of 589 letters of Charles Lamb, as against 417 in the Eversley, and 449 in the Fitzgerald Editions. It is true that this excess of almost 50 per cent. over the number of letters in the Eversley Edition is partly made up by the inclusion of many brief notes which Canon Ainger preferred to exclude—as I also would have preferred to exclude them had I considered my own convenience, and time, and profit, and much waste of eyesight, and electric units, and temper. To this, however, I shall return.

The next aim, or principle of editing, has been to insist upon, and use all possible means and arguments to secure, perfect fulness and fidelity of the text. This has always been difficult of attainment in regard to Lamb's letters, and even the most tiresome and insistent editor may have to be content, in the end, with something less than what seems to him absolutely indispensable. The forces against which he has to contend came into the field early, and it will be long before they are completely routed

from every rood, perch, cranny, and corner of it. Nevertheless, good words have their weight with the better intelligences, and I can congratulate myself on having secured the withdrawal of a veto placed upon certain passages in some of the letters of an important series. "Your argument is perfectly sound," I have been told; and consent, at first withheld, has been magnanimously accorded against the grain and bias of personal feeling and personal taste. The glory in such a case belongs to the conquered. Three influences have co-operated to defer, to make difficult, or to make impossible, the publication of a full and faithful version of Lamb's letters. (1) Consideration, especially on the part of the first editors, for the feelings of persons then living, or for the feelings of descendants of these, who might be a little sensitive as to something said to their kindred or of their kindred by a good friend and contemporary long dead. (2) The canons of taste of editors, or of their times—canons which may be either social, and therefore a passing moral fashion, or professional, and therefore somewhat more historical and august, or merely individual and personal. (3) The desire to perpetuate the conventional image of a Charles Lamb who is by no means so good or brave or struggling as the real one, but who is more readily understood by ordinary good people. In Talfourd's day, and up to 1870 or 1875, the first and second of these inhibiting conditions accounted for most; in more recent times, and in our own day, the second and third. For my own part, and for reasons which could not be set forth in less than a thousand pages folio, my own disposition, passion, purpose, and policy has been to make as little account of all three as by skill or violence as I could contrive. Therefore nothing, as far as I have been able to make my own will in the matter effective, has been omitted because, as

who should say, it was not written for the public; nor has any passage in the text been omitted because, for one reason or another, it was unintelligible. Let me cite examples—and of the last first.

A hitherto unprinted passage in the letter of 14th August 1800 reads thus, according to a reliable collation to which I have had access: "I find my moral sense in the last stage of consumption, my religion burning blue and faint as the tops of evening bricks." To the last two words it was difficult to attach any meaning; and it was submitted to me that as the phrase was unintelligible, and as, moreover, the clause was in none of the editions, it would be better to stop at the word "faint" as the editions do. But I argued, against this, that what was unintelligible to us to-day might be intelligible to others to-morrow. Either there might lurk in the passage some literary allusion, or there might be a reference to some phenomenon of evening light in cities which *we* had not noticed, or—most likely of all—there might have been some misreading of the original handwriting. Either it might be found that the first word was not "evening" or the second word was not "bricks," or both words might prove to have been misread. For I now discovered for the first time the practical utility of a certain course of lectures on the text of Lucretius to which I submitted my undergraduate soul some decade and a half ago. I saw again the vision of an athletic looking pundit of the modern school of scholarship standing with a piece of chalk in his hand, before a blackboard, and inscribing upon the same long rows of primitive and detached straight lines at all sorts of angles to one another, and sometimes amongst them a something that might have passed for the more developed and æsthetic pothook-and-hanger of our own infant schools. What was the young man doing? He was trying to get at the true reading of some corrupt

passage in Lucretius—or trying to show how the wrong reading, lately banished from the books, had ever come to be there—by a representation of the probable written look of the words in the characters in which they were first inscribed, showing how one letter, owing to something in its position, would be mistaken for another letter, and consequently one word here and there would get changed into a different word altogether. *Habent et sua fata manuscripta*; but what was a saving resource—a true restorative of the pristine virtues of classic writ—in the case of Lucretius might presently prove equally efficacious when applied to the text of Lamb. Meanwhile, what we had to do, I argued, was to give the words, nonsense or no, as we found them. So that point was decided. Now mark what followed. That letter went to the printers and came back to the publishers, by whom the first stage of reading —the "reading" of the slips, not yet made into sheets—was being seen to. From them the corrected slip came to me, and I found that somebody had puzzled at the phrase "evening bricks" and had modestly suggested on the margin "burning"? And, of course, "burning" it should have been, and "burning" was undoubtedly what Lamb wrote. It is the one word which makes perfect sense of the simile—those who have seen burning bricks will know the peculiar atmosphere, the blue grey haze, that hangs over them—and it is also the word which answers perfectly to the handwriting test. Anybody who likes can write the word "burning" and write it legibly, yet in a such a way that a not very careless eye shall read it—and a not very careless hand transcribe it—as "evening." I give the history of this felicitous emendation, however, not because of its intrinsic importance, but because it seems to show that mere forthright honesty, irrational and reprobate and troublesome and indecent though it be, is not

a bad servant even of the best purposes, and that faith in the truth is not without its rewards even for the sinner. And if as one of these best purposes we are disposed to count the placing of the image of Elia in the very centre of the hearts of English-speaking people, or the maintaining of him there, where he stands already, to this end also the true way, I submit, is not by any tortuosities and tamperings and tinkerings with the text of his letters—not by the suppression of this, and the rewriting of that, and the performing of an unhallowed operation upon the other passage — but by such straightforward editing, such frankness and fidelity of the text, as shall set more fully before us the true course and moral circumstance, from moment to moment, of a noble but not an easy nor an "exemplary" life—the many phases and accidentals of a character too comprehensive, idiomatic, and individual to be fit for the simple purposes of a copy-book heading, too mobile not to have taken, at one time and another, a chameleon diversity of impressions, and too vital not to have rioted in many veins. Upon those who opine that as such knowledge is increased, so love or respect may be diminished, there rests a heavy *onus probandi*; and even if it were so, there is something to be said for mere truth. "All is lost save honour" has always been felt to be a splendid paradox; but the notion that the finding of the truth can mean the losing of anything else is an absurdity which only the very profane are qualified to deal with and denounce in worthy terms.

And what, after all, are the offences which it has been deemed needful to draw a veil over, even to the obscuring of the sense, at times, as well as to the spoiling of the relish, of the true Elian scripture? Those offences fall under two headings—disgraceful language, and reprehensible conduct. The disgraceful language is of two sorts, and the one sort or the

other seems to impinge upon the sensibilities of editors according to the religious community to which they belong. For instance, Lamb, who belonged to the age of Shakespeare and also of Dryden, and also of Pope, besides being a contemporary of Jeremy Taylor (to say nothing of the notorious Baxter) and of the translators of the Bible—Lamb, who was almost the last writer of this country to whom his native language was really a vernacular and a mother tongue, and who had received in full the unattenuated tradition of an English undefiled by Augustine influences—Lamb would use, with perfect guilelessness and honest lack of shame, one or two simple and cleanly words which had borne the test of a thousand years of daily use and had received the sanction of the two great literatures, sacred and profane—words for which, nevertheless, the Victorian era has seen fit to subsitute others which mean the same thing but which are somehow felt to be quite different. Now, here the delicacy of Talfourd, who was undoubtedly Early Victorian and might almost have been the author of *Ah, no! we never mention her*, relucted fearfully. One "her" who is never mentioned in polite literature—or literature for the polite—became uniformly "unfortunate" in Talfourd's pages, or became a "woman of the street"—that very disgraceful phrase which has infected beyond all hope of purification the innocent and indispensable word "street," and so has defiled the ways which the best of women must daily walk in.* Another simple and almost scriptural monosyllable was deftly removed—contumeliously kicked

* As to the tabooed word, I have never met any but one man in my life who used it as Lamb and the Elizabethans and the translators used it, merely as a designation, without any feeling either of coarseness or contempt, without any sub-intention or associations of bad language or abuse. And this man, curiously enough, was also of the Temple. Perhaps the tradition of good

out, one ought rather to say—and a vague term, a sort of geographical expression, substituted instead. "My *back*"—says Lamb, according to Talfourd—"my *back* tingles from the northern castigation." Let me hasten to say that there is no allusion here to Scotland or Scotsmen but to a letter from Wordsworth, concerning "Lyrical Ballads," which was intended to teach C. L. a lesson in appreciation, and left rather a sore feeling behind. Again, Lamb's "humorous execrations," as Mr Fitzgerald properly calls them — little curses that intended no harm to anybody, "damn hims!" that almost expressed affection — were by Talfourd carefully softened away into such safe sillinesses as "hang him!" Or, to take another instance cited by Mr Fitzgerald, Lamb's moody or "petulant" expression about somebody having, since he last wrote to his correspondent, "gone sick and died and putrefied," gets transmitted into the crystalline and odourless "is dead and buried." For a final example of the effects of delicacy: Holcroft, being asked by Lamb who were the best dramatic writers of the day, answered: "Hook and I"—meaning, of course, himself and Theodore Hook. Lamb reports this answer in a letter to Manning, and adds, with subtle inconsequence: "You know what *hooks* and *eyes* are, don't you? They are what little boys do up their breeches with." This surprising definition was discreetly dropped out of the text by Talfourd; for if apocalyptic, it was also dreadful. Of this first variety of disgraceful language enough has been said, however; and the editorial refinements cannot conveniently be denounced without measure here, seeing that not every trace of them has been expunged even from these pages. For accidents will happen.

English dies hard there, or they make a point of keeping up old manners of speaking as well as some old customs.

The other stone of stumbling and rock of offence to editors has been Lamb's intermittent sense of reverence, the readiness with which he took some small religious risks. Probably he did not feel that there was any risk, did not believe that there was a jealous God in the sky eavesdropping and watching to catch a poor, kind-hearted, no-mischief-meaning sinner making a pun upon His name or glancing at some Shakespearean tale in holy writ with an eye of humour. At any rate, though one of the most reverent natures essentially, he would not forego a likely joke out of any mere conventional respect for persons, even persons of the Trinity; in which, by the way, he never pretended to believe. And just here we come on a curious thing. Talfourd, whose faults were those of the age of beauty-books, Amulets, Souvenirs, Talismans, Gems, Caskets and what not that is elegantly and immaculately literary—while his virtues were his own, in so far as they were not due to the influence of Lamb—Talfourd, who was so apt to make gratuitously decorous that which was in no sense indecent, was yet not so vigilant to remove the traces of impiety from Lamb's pages as subsequent editors have been. For instance, Lamb writes to Coleridge, criticising his poems: "I own I was just ready to acknowledge that there is a something not unlike good poetry in that page, if you had not run into the unintelligible abstraction-fit about the manner of the Deity's making spirits perceive his presence. God nor created thing alive can receive honour from such thin show-box attributes." So the text was given by Talfourd, and it is intelligible. But the modern texts (except Hazlitt's, and including—by an accident—that of this volume *) are not intelligible. In place of the

* The conditions of haste under which the last stages, especially, of this work, have had to be done have made it impossible that I should myself read all the sheets of the first volume, though I

words "God nor created thing alive" they substitute "No created thing alive"—which, seeing that Lamb is talking of the uncreated Eternal, makes folly of the passage and involves, indeed, an assertion of heterodoxy beyond the Anti-Trinitarian. It is, however, in the Dibdin letters that the classic examples of a theological censorship of Lamb's text are to be found. The Dibdin correspondence is a comparatively recent acquisition, and to Canon Ainger was vouchsafed the privilege of first giving it to the world. In his Introduction to the Letters he has some words on the subject, which I admire too much not to quote: "Readers of Lamb's correspondence may remember a reference to this gentleman 'the grandson of the songster,' as having died early of consumption, after seeking in vain the restorative climate of Madeira. I have told in my notes the story of Lamb's chance introduction to the young man, to whom he was henceforth drawn by kindred literary tastes, and even more by that which always deeply moved Charles Lamb—the sight of patient suffering or struggle. Mr Dibdin, a clerk in a city merchant's house, was often obliged to visit some southern watering-place for his health, and most of the present letters were evidently composed by Lamb with the single object of amusing his friend and relieving for a moment the tedium of his enforced idleness. It is as such that these letters must be judged. If their fun is at times of the most extravagant sort the true kindness of heart that prompted them will not be overlooked." Quite so; and since I am in the mood for quoting churchmen this morning, let me quote another. "Qui fratri,"

revised most of them. Much to my chagrin, therefore, I discovered, when it was too late to mend the matter, that neither this passage, nor that describing Lamb's distressful local sensations. had been rectified, as I understood they had been, on the margin of the copy sent to the printers. When this came under my notice, those particular sheets were already printed off. The reader will mourn with me.

quoth à Kempis (*Hort. Ros.* xvii. 1.)—"Qui fratri librum sacræ lectionis porrigit, vinum optimum ore Jesu propinat." If this character belong to the donation of a book of sacred reading, folio or tract, I cannot but think that a high degree of religious merit would belong also, in the sight of the very Best Judge of literary and other matters, to a kindness-carrying and merry-making letter sent by Charles Lamb to cheer a human brother who was languishing, though he knew it not, in the fatal ebb of his mortal powers. Those letters, I say, might with safety, and with no trembling hope either, have been left for the Lord to sub-edit or to censure upon a future day. But then, as another editor of Lamb remarks, in quite a different connection: "It is possible to be more sensitive for others than they are for themselves." On some such principle of gratuitous and excessive considerateness Canon Ainger has been careful to omit from his text one or two merry passages which might be regarded as likely to hurt the feelings of what Mrs Poyser, I think, called THEM ABOVE. So when Charles Lamb, after observing that Dibdin's letter to him is as long as those to the Ephesians and Galatians put together, goes on to say: "But then Paul has nothing like the fun that is ebullient all over yours" and that he can remember "but one pun in all the Evangely"—*Delendum est!* A few sentences further on something equally, and not a whit more, subversive of religion and social order is firmly and quietly suppressed; and other letters of the series bear marks of the same determined zeal for the general soul's safety of this generation of readers. That safety is perhaps a little dearly bought, however, at the price of even a small degree of re-writing of Lamb's letters by his editors. For instance, the letter which more than any other bears tokens of that benevolent intention which Canon Ainger has so feelingly described is the one dated September 9,

1826. His avowed purpose was to impart a little brightness to that most dreary passage in human life, a wet Sunday in sea-side lodgings. His topic is the beleaguering deadness. The inexhaustible number of impossibilities that beset such a day for his friend, the infinity of things which he will find that he can't do as soon as he has thought of trying to do them. Towards the close of this lovely and humorous catalogue of "can't do's"—through which there runs as undertone the audible chuckle of the mischievous Charles Lamb—there comes this: "You cannot say 'To-morrow I set off for Banstead, by God!'" Now there is great virtue—that is to say, great fun and humour and dramatic zest and value—in that "by God": expressing as it does the emphatic courage of a desperation that has suddenly flared into anger and revolt. We are within measurable distance of Lear, who "will do—such *things*!" But Canon Ainger could not, apparently, give his name to a piece of editing which admitted such impieties: the two tremendous little words had to be suppressed. Only, as some compensation in this instance, and that nobody might feel there was, somehow, a certain lack of momentum and sincerity in the passage, an unimpeachable trisyllable is interpolated as make-weight, and we have *this*: "To-morrow morning I set off for Banstead." I confess that the compensation seems to me insufficient; I feel that something is wanting here, and if I tried to give that something a name I should be inclined to say it was Charles Lamb. Well, enough of this. These are little things, when all is said, and whoever likes may regard it as particularly little in me to say so much about them. But, just because they are little, the excuse for them is very small, since there was the less provocation to make or meddle in the matter. It is far better to let Lamb be himself entirely, or if one cannot, owing to prior engagements, edit

him and do that, the next best thing is to let him be altogether. Not that I can myself wish it had been so decided in the past, least of all in 1888, for by the latter alternative, which would, I fear, have been accepted, we should have lost too much. But I do think it is time now that we recognised that Lamb is a privileged classic—a classic, and therefore privileged—not a mere proselyte of the gate of literature, but one who enters in and belongs there, bag and baggage of his work, better and best in the variations, the moments, of his personality. For just this is the distinction of the classic—that whereas of other writers only their best (as it is called) is interesting or is desired, of him everything is interesting and significant that is his. 'Tis because everything of his is exceptional, yet everything nearer to the centre, to the true average of human nature, than the most finished excellence of the most faultless ordinariness can be. I talk, of course, of the men who write. The best people and the wisest, with a few miraculous exceptions in every century, have never entered into that business at all: literature has no record of them. But where it has the record of a personality in which the principle of life, of central and immediate life, was strong, and its expression radial and direct at all angles, then literature knows it has to do with a classic, and it accepts not him because of his work but all his work because of him. There is then a suspension of those lesser laws by which we pass judgment upon those who are merely applicants for our approval. And that is all, of course, that Charles Lamb was—a certain unimportant, non-fashionable, private little man, lately dead, placed before the world as an applicant for its approval, its interest—in the first books of Talfourd and his friends. But we have travelled a long way since that, and have learned a great deal—have learned everything, indeed, except

to recognise the point that we have arrived at. And surely that is the point of seeing that Charles Lamb is no longer that unimportant, non-fashionable, inconspicuous private person, nor even Mr Charles Lamb of the India House—but LAMB, a great English classic and a unique personality, a possession of the world, and a name moving in the supreme and privileged plane of Letters. When that conception has clearly formulated itself to the general mind then such qualified and cautionary toleration as is accorded to that varied personality in the Eversley Edition will be seen to have been not so much an impertinence (which I do not call it) as an anachronism and a survival. Then we shall find the publishers of that edition, worthily jealous for their own great fame, regarding it as a matter of course, an axiom both of self-respect and of business intelligence, that their editions of *Lamb's Letters*—that great literature—shall be as free from all touch of moral purification and religious censorship as their indispensable Globe *Sheakespeare* their more admirable Globe *Dryden* or Globe *Pope*. All that is needed —the idea that has tarried so long—is the perception that Lamb, though he is a little nearer to our own day, is yet in the same category as these: a privileged classic, a timeless spirit, that must be permitted to go large and free.

The second great cause of difficulty to Lamb's editors, next to disgraceful language, was what I have called (in order to conciliate the right sort of people and lure them on to read further) his reprehensible conduct. Not content with swearing and having a relish for rude Saxon words and coupling references to the Evangely with the praise of puns, he was one that would as soon drink with a friend as not. And, to add to the offence, if he drank too much with that friend during one session, which would sometimes happen, he was sure to give the

affair its worst name and to say that on such an occasion he had got *drunk*. And no doubt there was some basis for that exaggerated view of the matter, for he was pretty certain to feel a wreck next morning. That was his constitution; and what we have to recognise from the first in considering this vexed question of Lamb and his drinkings is just this—that what is presented to our consideration is indeed a *constitution*, and not a *character*, nor even, mainly, a *habit*. What distinguished him, in this respect, from the respectable men his acquaintances was not the amount that he drank but the effect which a very little had upon him. Not that he would on all occasions drink only a very little, any more than other men of spirit; but that when he *had* taken the liberating quantity—when he *had* shipped his anchor, slipped his moorings, sailed free away from care—there was something to notice, something to remark upon, and to remember. The nature of the something would depend much upon the congeniality or otherwise of the immediate presences. If the audience included a Comptroller of Stamps there was great likelihood that Mr Lamb would disgrace himself. If the libation were poured in the course of a long fireside talk with Talfourd or Leigh Hunt or Hazlitt (who drank only poisoned water—that is to say, tea) then, indeed, "the stammerer went forth a statist"—or a seraphical Doctor of letters, or an embodied spirit escaped from olden libraries and full of quaint and learned news—emitting continuous and voluble discourse that would have been the setting up of half-a-dozen authorships. That is the generalised statement of the truth of the matter, taking the whole course of his life; and in view of the whole course of his life, what its conditions were, and how it was lived, nothing could be more gratuitous than the attempt to apologise for Lamb's drinking—except the folly which concerns

itself with the question whether he was a *Drunkard*! Were one drawing the moral line of his life in more detail, one would have, however, to give their due value to some differences, to note two periods in his biography which more than others are pervaded by a suspicion of inspiring fumes. During the first three or four years of the opening century, when Lamb was really first beginning to mingle with men, to come in contact with the mixed and muddied world of actual life and of London and of journalism —in the days when he moved down from Pentonville upon Holborn again, like a young monk issuing from retreat, or a banished lover of cities come back to town—it was a great period! It was the second formative period in his intellectual life, and we may say generally that, with some after-qualifications, some relentings and mellowings to make all good and human in the end, it finished the process of the making of him. The positive part of the account of those years I cannot now pretend to go into. But the negative part of it, if we must call it negative, was that, with many friends, that period brought him also some hail-fellows: that if it integrated his mind it also a little dissipated his first morals; that if he gathered courage and canvassed the questions of life with an astonishing new insolence, a note of swagger and defiance, this good gift had come to him through keeping bad company and walking in evil ways. That is to say, he dabbled in journalism; his colleagues in these adventures being cronies or *convives* rather more than friends, and their moral description being half way between reformers and *roués*, idealists, and demireps. At any rate, we have it that they were "great sitters up o' nights, disputants, drunken"—we know how he afterwards turned them to account, making them "sit up" for their portraits, with certain high lights of artifice thrown into the picture for exhibition pur-

poses, in *Confessions of a Drunkard.* And certain it is that during those years of journalising—years of intellectual initiation, change, and development—he did what every young man who was not born mean would do: he permitted himself to be absorbed by this new moral atmosphere, this new class of interests, these new types of men: and he went, for some part of the way, with the stream of tendency which these things belonged to, as a good fellow would. But only for some part of the way; for only the stupid must play a game to the last move to know which side shall win; only fools must go through with an experience to know what its inevitable issues are. Nor is there an admission here made that even during those years—the Fenwick and Fell, and gin-and-water, and knock-eternal visitor era — Charles Lamb was liable to the imputation of being a drunkard, or on the way to merit that stigma. But it is more than probable that he was more frequently what he would have resolutely called *drunk* at that time than at any other period of his life. We have his own exceedingly frank avowals for it; we have Mary's philosophic noting of the fact that "Charles came home very *smoky* and *drinky* last night." Came home from what? From conferences on things of state in a back parlour—from a review of the perils of the political situation—from a planning of our next Number, which was to ruin the Government and save the country, no doubt. And no doubt these high missions require the sustenance of pure cordials, of distilled essences, of quintessentials, and of sublimations various and pervading. In other words, there is no stream, not even the stream of rhetoric, flows so perennially in *that* region of Fleet Street, whether in London or the provincial uplands, as the pellucid tides of gin-and-water, or their equivalents, according somewhat to differences of clime and local custom. By "that region" I mean, of course, the region of the bravely-

enterprising little rag, the organ of irresponsible and unbought (also unpaid-for) criticism and witticism, the journalistic good thing that always dies young. But it is possible to have too much of a good thing; and though all Lamb's journalistic engagements were not exclusively in the region I have alluded to—for was he not an early prop of such permanencies as the *Morning Post*?—yet he confesses that if his editor grew discontented, he, also, grew tired.

With the close of this first period of journalising, there is a perceptible change in the tone of the letters. Without any loss of the intellectual strengthening gained in those years, there is some sloughing of a recently acquired habit of mind that had affinities with cynicism, with an affectation ofcontempt, almost of brutality. It is a well-known phase, and has its uses in the mental life history, though many who have just talent enough to reach it become spent with the journey, or infatuated with the scene, and rest there all their lives. Here, then, we issue from one period in Lamb's biography—the period of his descent upon town and his taking hold upon "real life," and his being taken hold of, himself, by the fascination, the delusion of it—a period in which there was a great deal of immediate zest, and high interest, and good fellowship in a sort of adventure, and withal a great deal of quaffing of the cup of kindness and of mutual enconragement. His letters and Mary's tell the truth on the matter sufficiently for all purposes, and the result is not disgrace to anybody. But as he "grew tired of it" and drew away from some of the old associations, if not of the old associates, and drew nearer to such men—Wordsworth especially—as he could look up to with absolute moral respect as well as admiration for their gifts, and as he realised, in a more detached, more seeing, and intellectual way than he had ever done before, the generosity and unjudging wisdom and steadfastness of Mary's nature,

how greatly she was a strength to him without ever wishing to be a curb, and how weak he should be without her, then he was a little inclined to regard the immediate past as years which the locust had eaten, still more to regard with a kind of resentment those preoccupations and partnerships which had made him a little forget for a while—not indeed forget, but yet not always sufficiently remember—that here, in their poor lodging, was the true centre of things for him, the true business, care, occupation, and object of his life.

And it is with that chosen care of his, with his devotion to that one dear object, that we must associate in no small degree those references to what is called over-indulgence which reappear towards the close of the correspondence. Again we are reminded how closely the study of Lamb's physical constitution ought to be related to the history of his life and the sympathetic interpretation of his work. That study is beyond my powers to supply, nor would there be room to attempt it here. But one may note at least that the last ten years of his life, still more distinctly the last five, present us with the spectacle of the spirit bravely seeking to hold its old powers together, and to keep its old lustre inextinguishably bright, amid a steady breaking up of the physical forces, a subsidence of the powers of reaction and of real joy, an ominous gathering and deepening of the glooms which had long beset him in vain. The hero will bear him gallantly in a long day's fight, and retain his courage to the close, yet when evening comes the man will he be a little fordone. And so it was with Charles Lamb. There is no period of his life that appeals to me more, or that more eloquently speaks him a good man, than those years around 1830, so full as they are of the tokens of just such a fatigue. Yet those years more than any others are marked by the presence of that failing, as it is called, which—or

the imputation of which—has secured him the attention of a kind of people whom he never had any desire to come acquainted with in life and probably relucts from ever and anon, even now, when the echoes of their lucubrations reach him in his "coffin dreams." For in those last years he had, more than ever before, a need for that lifting of the load of care or of more continuous joylessness, the slight gladdening of the heart, the quickening of the sense of life, which cordials were created to supply man withal in his hour of need; but also he was less than ever able to keep that inspiration a secret or to carry his happiness home unremarked. He has told us how the attempt resulted, on one immaculate social occasion, in his having to be carried home himself. He tells us also, in a letter to Mrs Hazlitt, how upon his visiting the clergyman's faimly to whom Emma Isola was governess, young Emma took him into a corner and said: "Now don't drink, for my sake. Do check yourself after dinner; and when we get home to Enfield you may drink as much as ever you please and I won't say a word about it." And he could tell this story of himself with amusement and without shame because he knew himself to be no drunkard, nor a habitually saturated person, but one to whom the drinking of a glass or two of wine, while agreeable rather than otherwise, was yet for constitutional reasons a dangerous and chemical experiment. And in those very years we find him refusing to come to town to meet Wordsworth, though there was scarce a man in the world whom he would have gone farther to see. But he knows the round of visits it means; and while it was not in his nature to meet a friend and not be friendly, yet he knows also that the flesh is weak and can discharge but lamely the obligations which the generous spirit is like to impose upon it. All of which means nothing if it does not mean that the improving reflections which have been too fre-

quently indited on this subject would have been less irrelevant had they taken the form, not of expatiations, mournful or apologetic, upon Lamb's peculiar and imperfect character, but rather of some forcible and just remarks upon his peculiar and imperfect stomach and his thoroughly immoral nervous system.

And still more complete would be the rout of the curious impertinents who peddle moral commonplaces and call it criticism, were there room to trace the influence—upon his health and spirits and entire vital powers—of Mary's illnesses, which were a cloud falling remorselessly upon every year, and now growing broader and blacker as the years went on, until it seemed as if the stretch of the four seasons must soon be one long midnight, leading round to no day and bounded only at either extremity by twilights of distress. But these things are not my immediate topic, and it will be sufficient if I now point out the bearings of the foregoing, upon my present argument, upon the bibliographical history of "Lamb's Letters" as a collection and a book. Again the beginning of mischief, if also the better part of all merit, is to be sought in Talfourd. For one class of reasons he left out of the text many personal references, and for another class of reasons he adulterated a little, here and there, its Elizabethan purity of word and phrase. For another reason—or perhaps for the same one—he left out of his portrait of Lamb, certainly he left out of the correspondence, those features, those real-life incidents, which he did not himself consider at all sordid or blameworthy, but which he feared might inhibit the sympathy of his readers with the life story of a man who, after all, was nobody very important and quite unknown, personally, to them. He was afraid of allowing a suspicion of something not quite well-bred, something just on this side of low life and vulgar ways, to attach itself to the character which it was his aim to commend to the general interest and

sympathy and admiration. And he attained that aim admirably, as we know; only, his way of attaining it, like his way of dealing with the correspondence generally, has created much work for later men to do, and work which some men sincerely regard as distasteful. These reluct from anything tending to modify—and to modify, as they fear, in an unfavourable sense—the altogether charming impression which the Talfourd books and the Talfourd tradition have imposed upon the general mind as the moral portrait of Charles Lamb. That, they fear, must be the result of revealing *this*, which Talfourd with fine moral artifice concealed, or restoring *that*, which Talfourd out of true respect for his friend suppressed. But the argument is wrong and the fears are groundless. That traditional impression will never have to be effaced, for it has in the highest degree the virtue and power of its kind as a statement of the moral essentials of a personality addressed to the sentiments and the imagination. It is enough for all the uses of love, and will not have to be cancelled, but it is not enough for the uses of knowledge, and may have need to be supplemented. Not to say that its fault is an affinity with the faultlessness of beauty books, let me rather say that its limitation is in being generalised, in being abstract. There was, in a word, *a great deal more* in Charles Lamb—a great deal more that was interesting, and various, and sardonic, and strong and subtle, yet not a whit less that was lovable in the long run—than the Talfourd tradition gives account of or is even willing to admit. He was just as good a man as the St Charles of our literary oratories, but, in addition to this he was a much more interesting character, and more likely to smile at worshippers in all attitudes. And to show us this, I submit, is the true tendency and effect of every new removal of the vestiges of what was in the beginning, perhaps, not a needless veil. Instead of

the abstract sentimental formula we have the psychological particulars; instead of the moral resultant, we have, more and more, the composition and direction of the forces. And sure I am, that if the constitution of the public mind had been such, as to have admitted of a perfectly full and perfectly frank publication of all his correspondence instantly and once for all in 1848, a publication fuller and franker than any hitherto effected, then I am sure that the place which Charles Lamb holds in the affection and in the respect of the world to-day would be not an inch lower or farther from the centre than it is. So little is it true that he owes anything to Talfourd's gift for dressing a part, so little is it true that the world has been making too much of a pseudonymous mirage in giving its homage and its love to the heroic and gentle Elia, man and child. Still, through the spaces of its imagination the child would go, a privileged wanderer, lame and lovely; and still it would see the man, himself in the meshes of imminent distraction, and burdened with unspeakable sorrow for others, and beset year after year by cloud-like vanguards and armies of gloom—yet ever encountering them with the magic of a bravely loving heart, with a smile that transmuted them into an inner enrichment and a possession, and a power, into an atmosphere of the mind, not opalescent and disastrous, but charged with serene benevolence and sunset glories.

Of the third editorial principle or aim, the effecting of a nearer approach to correctness in the chronological order of the Letters, I must speak very briefly, although the only merit that I can lay claim to lies just here. The Reader knows that Talfourd cared for these things as little as an editor of another man's "Letters with a sketch of his life" could well contrive. When the fragments of the Letters were put together and what was called the complete correspondence published in 1868-70 a very great step was

effected in regard to the dating of the Letters, and hardly anything has been added to the work of that time. Yet a great deal remained, and still remains, to do. A goodly number of mistakes of Talfourd's were allowed to stand, albeit it should have seemed impossible that any editor could pass them by. Canon Ainger quotes an interesting example of a letter which the most elementary knowledge of the literary biography of that time—the biography of Coleridge, of Wordsworth, and of divers friends of theirs—should have enabled anyone to fix as belonging to 1797 and not, where Talfourd had placed it and his successors had left it, 1800. But as a fact Canon Ainger as well as Mr Hazlitt has passed by a good half-dozen errors for which there was as little excuse as for the one which he makes it a merit to have corrected. For instance, in that edition, and in all others since Talfourd's day, a letter to Wordsworth, describing how Mary is "stuck fast in *As you like it*," is placed in the summer of 1805, although quite a number of letters described to us the course and composition of the Tales from Shakspeare which was not begun until the following year. Again, Canon Ainger has not troubled to deal with the confusion which is created in the correspondence of January and February 1797 by the appearance thereabouts of a letter dated January 16th in which Lamb tells Coleridge with no small emotion—indeed, accompanying the news with a celebration in song—that Charles Lloyd is in town and has called upon him: this, following letters in which there are repeated references to what Lloyd has said to him and what Lloyd has done, and what he thinks of Lloyd. Again the Canon has placed a letter to Howard Payne—indubitably the first letter written to him after making his acquaintance in Paris—quite late in the Howard Payne series, and *after* a letter in which Lamb asks Payne whether he has yet seen "my friend White," whose intention of coming to

Paris and calling upon Payne was *announced* in the aforesaid first Payne letter, though it is not the first in that arrangement of them. Again, there is a letter to Coleridge, dated Tuesday 1829, in which Lamb apologises in a state of some distraction for his helpless inability, owing to the state of his health, to keep an appointment which he had made to call upon Coleridge at the Gilman's on Thursday. Now the most moderate acquaintance with the Letters should have warned anyone that there was something wrong here; for the allusions to the state of his health and to the nervous after-effects of a long illness refuses to relate itself to what we know of that particular year and place in the correspondence. The letter belongs, in fact, to the spring of 1826, and I have been able to fix it as to year and month and day of the month as well as day of the week. How? Because the letter making the appointment which he now writes to say he cannot keep, is in the correspondence and fully dated. Other instances might be quoted showing the facile way in which the most random dates of Talfourd—perhaps even of Talfourd's printer—have continued to be received by the third and fourth, not to say the final generation of editors. Again, difficult as the correspondence of 1800 is, it might have been made more straightforward by a determination to arrive at something less impossible than the jumble of letters that are all credited, in any kind of order, to the tipsy month of August of that year. I say nothing of the editorial equability, not to call it carelessness, which places a letter in which Lamb says that the kindness he had experienced from Manning on their making acquaintance at Cambridge now emboldened him to open a correspondence with that gentleman—in *succession to* a letter, given as the first of that series, in which he tells Manning that, having allowed a decent interval to elapse, he now ventures to write to him again. Of course, that is

how they were placed in the unfortunate 1868 book, and stereotyped in the Fitzgerald Edition; but no compositor should ever have been engaged to reassert the error in innocent new type. As I have already hinted, the decision to do without most of the Allsop and a number of the Hone letters is one which I envy Canon Ainger exceedingly. For surely there is nothing more enviable than the good fortune of a man, editor or no, whose conscientious convictions agree with his interests, or his ease. Canon Ainger's conscientious conviction is, that 'tis unfair to Lamb to load his correspondence with scrappy little notes, such as most of the Allsop letters are. I have myself no opinion on the matter that deserves to be called a conscientious conviction or objection, but I have been struck with the extent to which the scrappiness and insignificance of some of these notes disappeared, when one succeeded, after moving awhile on the verge of insanity, in assigning the thing its rational place in a series. For their length there are no letters in the whole correspondence more interesting to us than the two or three letters to Allsop while Mary was ill in 1824, especially those having reference to the making of Lamb's will. One of these is undated, or misdated, and, after a struggle, I had discovered what was wrong—only to find, however, that in this case I had been anticipated by Mr Hazlitt, who has seen the original, and declares that the postmark supports the view which I had arrived at. Not to exhaust the catalogue of my achievements, so leaving nothing unknown and magnificent, let me say, generally, that in every main section of the correspondence I think I may claim to have made the way easier for the Reader who is in the habit of remembering what he read on the preceding page, and who desires to find the contents of the page that follows in a concatenation accordingly. To be sure, a very great deal remains to be done; a good deal which even I could do with

a few weeks or a few days or even a few hours more at my disposal for the attempt. For instance, a number of the Howard Payne letters might be fixed by a comparison with the annals of the Stage—the first performances, etc.—of that period. But time has been denied me. I say nothing about the incredible dates of some new letters that have come to my hands —such as letters written in the midst of India House bustle and business in 1829!—but I ought to mention to the Reader, and apologise for the fact, that by some misadventure befalling the printed slips which were sent to the printer two letters in Volume I., called attention to in the table of contents, have wandered out of their proper sphere.

To come to the very lame and impotent conclusion of this discourse, I must express my regret that want of time has made it absolutely impossible that this editor should have attempted to equip these volumes with such a complement of Notes as he would have wished to supply. In the absolute inability of achieving anything in that direction that was worth doing I seriously considered whether I did not owe it to myself to let these volumes go without any, even the meagrest pretence of note-writing. However, I decided to append a few scattered explanations of the kind that an editor with a bad memory might permit himself to indite when time was wanting in which to look up information or verify references. I ought to say that the same conditions of pressure in the getting out of these volumes have compelled me to be very thankful for the ample assistance rendered in such matters as proof-reading, etc., by some of the members of the staff of Aldine House. Some of the early sheets of the first volume were not read by me at all, but I have only noticed one place which betrays the absence of the editorial eye. And that is not a mistake of this edition, but a stereotyped blunder of forty to sixty years of age, which by that intermission

of vigilance has been allowed to make, I hope, its last appearance in decent type.

The very grateful thanks of Editor and Publishers are due to Mr Robert W. Dibdin for permission to copy the entire series of Dibdin letters, which are here given for the first time in the integrity of their humour and kindness; and also to Lady Elton for a copy of Lamb's interesting letter to her grandfather. To Mr George Pritchard our thanks are due for a copy of an interesting letter to Taylor and Hessey, and to Mr Edward Ayrton for a number of hitherto unpublished letters to William Ayrton, as well as for help in various ways. The kindness of Miss Betham-Edwards and the consent of Messrs Griffith Farran and Brown have enabled us to include all the Betham correspondence; and similar kindness in Mr Kegan Paul has placed the Godwin correspondence at our disposal. For an extremely interesting letter of Southey to Lamb, and also for a collation of Lamb's response to the same, our thanks are due to Miss Warter, a grand-daughter of Robert Southey; and another grand-daughter of the poet, Miss Bertha Alethea Hill, has to be thanked for a new collation of one of the most important later Southey letters. For an extra Coleridge letter, as also for a letter to Harwood (not, I take it, Thomas) Holcroft, thanks are due to Mrs Alfred Morrison; and to Mr B. B. Macgeorge for a Barton letter not in the British Museum collection. Bnt indeed in nearly every section of this edition we have been under deep obligation to those happy depositories of so much Lamb treasure, who are such friends to the friends of Lamb. Another friend who has helped has been Mr Ernest Hartley Coleridge, but for whom we should have had to do without some illustrations and portraits which we could have ill spared. Reverting to the letters, let me not forget the prompt and hearty way in which Mr John Hollingshead—himself one of the very few men now living who link our own poorer

day not only with the Elian generation but with the Elian circle and the household of Charles and Mary Lamb—responded to my request for permission to include those two letters to Fanny Kelly, and her reply. For the two letters to Dr Asbury, we are indebted to the editor of the "Athenæum." My personal obligations are many, and the acknowledgments not expressed here will be understood where due. I may refer, however, as regards the struggle to obtain textual accuracy, to the benefit to the edition resulting from the sympathetic supervision, amounting to a collaboration, on the part of the publishers. In two of the volumes especially—"Critical Essays" and "Poems and Plays"—this struggle was tragic and prolonged. There were certain "signatures" or sheets which it seemed as if I would never pass—and indeed had I died in August last, I am sure that "Sig. N" would have been found engraven on my heart—but my pertinacity in being troublesome has been responded to with an equal zeal, and a greater patience. Let me also name here, the friend of my academic youth, Mr George Smith, now the Rector of Merchiston, and an Elian since before I knew him. To Dr W. G. Smith also, of Liverpool University, I am indebted for his expert report upon such knotty questions, as the desire to hunt things to their roots prompted me to lay before him in his philosophical and scientific capacities. I must also allude to my friend R. to whom I am indebted for references to early printed sources, and also for having submitted Lamb's Latin epistles to the scrutiny of an eye many times more certain to detect a flaw in that kind of letterpress —"Priscian a little scratched," or a little misprinted—than mine would be. Lastly, I would name Surgeon-Major Butterworth, a friend whom I have never met, but who has obliged me by a correspondence both encouraging and informing.

W. M.

BOOK IV.—1821-1827

THE ELIAN ERA

CHAPTER I

RUSSELL STREET AND RURAL FLIGHTS
JANUARY 1821—AUGUST 1823

CCXXXIV. TO MARIANNE AYRTON

Coogar, 23 Jan. 1821.

Dear Mrs Ayrton,

My sister desires me, as being a more expert person than herself, to say that she saw Mrs Paris yesterday, and that she is very much out of spirits, and has expressed a great wish to see your son William and Fanny. I like to write that word *Fanny*. I do not know, but it was one reason for taking on me this pleasing task. Moreover that if the said William and Francis will go and sit an hour with her at any time, she will engage that no one shall see them but herself, and the servant who opens the door, she being confined to her private room. I trust you and the Juveniles will comply with this reasonable request.

I am

Dear Mrs Ayrton

Your's and your's truly

C. Lamb.

CCXXXV. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

30 March, 1821.

My Dear Sir,—If you can come next Sunday we shall be equally glad to see you, but do not trust to any of Martin's appointments, except on business, in future. He is notoriously faithless in that point, and we did wrong not to have warned you. Leg of Lamb, as before, hot at 4. And the heart of Lamb ever.

Yours truly,

C. L.

CCXXXVI. TO LEIGH HUNT

Indifferent Wednesday, 1821.

Dear Hunt,—There was a sort of side-talk at Mr Novello's about our spending *Good Friday* at Hampstead; but my sister has got so bad a cold, and we both want rest so much, that you shall excuse our putting off the visit some time longer. Perhaps, after all, you know nothing of it.

Believe me, yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCXXXVII. TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1821.

Dear C.,—I will not fail you on Friday at six, and Mary, perhaps, earlier. I very much wish to meet "Master Mathew," and am much obliged to the G.'s for the opportunity. Our kind respects to them always.

ELIA.

Extract from a MS. note of S. T. C. in my Beaumont and Fletcher, dated April 17th, 1807.

"*Midnight.*

God bless you, dear Charles Lamb, I am dying: I feel I have not many weeks left.

Mr Gilman's,

Highgate."

CCXXXVIII. TO JAMES GILMAN

Wednesday, May 2.

Dear Sir,—You dine so late on Friday, it will be impossible for us to go home by the eight o'clock stage. Will you oblige us by securing us beds at some house, from which a stage goes to the Bank in the morning? I would write to Coleridge, but cannot think of troubling a dying man with such a request.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

If the beds in the town are all engaged in consequence of Mr Mathews's appearance, a Hackney coach will serve.

We shall neither of us come much before the time.

CCXXXIX. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Postmark, May 14, 1821.

Dear A.

We are at home this Evening. Excuse forms from,

Your unin*formed*, C. L.

We'nsdy.

I think Madame Noblet the least graceful dancer I ever *did not see*.

CCXL. TO J. P. COLLIER

May 16, 1821.

Dear J. P. C.,—Many thanks for the "Decameron:" I have not such a gentleman's book in my collection; it was a great treat to me, and I got it just as I was wanting something of the sort. I take less pleasure in books than heretofore, but I like books about books. In the second volume in particular are treasures—your discoveries about "Twelfth Night," etc. What a Shakespearian essence that speech of Osrades for food! Shakespeare is coarse to it, beginning "Forbear and eat no more." Osrades warms up to

that, but does not set out ruffian-swaggerer. The character of the Ass with those three lines, worthy to be set in gilt vellum, and worn in frontlets by the noble beasts for ever—

> "Thou would, perhaps, he should become thy foe,
> And to that end dost beat him many times:
> He cares not for himself, much less thy blow."

Cervantes, Sterne, and Coleridge, have said positively nothing for asses compared with this.

I write in haste; but p. 24, vol. I., the line you cannot appropriate is Gray's sonnet, specimenifyed by Wordsworth, in first preface to L. B., as mixed of bad and good style: p. 143, 2nd vol., you will find, last poem but one of the collection on Sidney's death, in Spenser, the line,

> "Scipio, Cæsar, Petrarch of our time":

This fixes it to be Raleigh's: I had guess'd it Daniel's. The last after it, "Silence augmenteth rage," I will be crucified if it be not Lord Brooke's. Hang you, and all meddling researches hereafter, that by raking into learned dust may find me out wrong in my conjecture!

Dear J. P. C.,—I shall take the first opportunity of personally thanking you for my entertainment. We are at Dalston for the most part, but I fully hope for an evening soon with you in Russell or Bouverie Street, to talk over old times and books. Remember *us* kindly to Mrs J. P. C.

Yours very kindly,

CHARLES LAMB.

I write in misery.

N.B.—The best pen I could borrow at our butcher's: the ink, I verily believe, came out of the kennel.

CCXLI. TO JOHN TAYLOR

8 July 1821.

Dear Sir,—I am extremely sorry to be obliged to decline the article proposed, particularly as I should have been flattered with a Plate accompanying it. In the first place, Midsummer Day is not a topic I could make anything of, I am so pure a Cockney, and little read besides in May games and antiquities; and in the second, I am here at Margate, spoiling my holydays with a Review I have undertaken for a friend, which I shall barely get through before my return, for that sort of work is a hard task to me. If you will excuse the shortness of my first contribution (and I *know* I can promise nothing more for July) I will endeavour a longer article for *our next*. Will you permit me to say that I think Leigh Hunt would do the Article you propose in a masterly manner, if he has not out-writ himself already upon the subject. I do not return the proof—to save postage—because it is correct, with *one exception*. In the stanza from Wordsworth you have changed *day* into *air* for rhyme's sake. *Day* is the right reading, and *I implore you to restore it*.

The other passage, which you have queried, is to my ear correct. Pray let it stand.

Dear sir, yours truly,

C. Lamb.

Margate.

J. Taylor, Esq.

On second consideration I do enclose the proof.

CCXLII. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

July 17, 1821.

Dear Ayrton,

In consequence of the August Coronation we propose postponing (I wonder if these words

ever met so close before—mark the Elegancy) our Wensday this week to friday, when a grand rural fete champetre will be given at Russell house. The back garden to be illuminated in honor of the late ceremony.

Vivat Regina
Moriatur * * *

C. L.

CCXLIII. TO JOHN TAYLOR

July 21, 1821.

Dear Sir,—The *Lond. Mag.* is chiefly pleasant to me, because some of my friends write in it. I hope Hazlitt intends to go on with it, we cannot spare Table Talk. For myself I feel almost exhausted, but I will try my hand a little longer, and shall not at all events be written out of it by newspaper paragraphs. Your proofs do not seem to want my helping hand, they are quite correct always. For God's sake change *Sisera* to *Jael*. This last paper will be a choke-pear I fear to some people, but as you do not object to it, I can be under little apprehension of your exerting your Censorship too rigidly.

Thanking you for your extract from Mr E.'s letter,
I remain, Dear Sir,
Your obliged,
C. Lamb.

Messrs Taylor & Hessey,
Booksellers, Fleet Street.
Mr Taylor.

CCXLIV. TO THE SAME

July 30, 1821.

Dear Sir,—You will do me injustice if you do not convey to the writer of the beautiful lines, which I now return you, my sense of the extreme kindness which dictated them. Poor Elia (call him *Ellia*)

does not pretend to so very clear revelations of a future state of being as Olen seems gifted with. He stumbles about dark mountains at best; but he knows at least how to be thankful for this life, and is too thankful indeed for certain relationships lent him here, not to tremble for a possible resumption of the gift. He is too apt to express himself lightly, and cannot be sorry for the present occasion, as it has called forth a reproof so Christian-like. His *animus* at least (whatever become of it in the female termination) hath always been *cum Christianis*.

Pray make my gratefullest respects to the Poet, (do I flatter myself when I hope it may be M——y?) and say how happy I should feel myself in an acquaintance with him. I will just mention that in the middle of the second column, where I have affixed a cross, the line

"One in a skeleton's ribb'd hollow cooped,"

is undoubtedly wrong. Should it not be—

"A skeleton's rib or ribs"?

or,

"In a skeleton ribb'd, hollow-coop'd"?

I perfectly remember the plate in Quarles. In the first page exoteric is pronounced exoteric. It should be (if that is the word) exoteric. The false accent may be corrected by omitting the word *old*. Pray, for certain reasons, give me to the 18th *at furthest extremity* for my next.

Poor Elia, the real, (for I am but a counterfeit,) is dead. The fact is, a person of that name, an Italian, was a fellow clerk of mine at the South Sea House, thirty (not forty) years ago, when the characters I described there existed, but had left it like myself many years; and I having a brother now there, and doubting how he might relish certain descriptions in it, I clapt down the name of Elia to it, which passed

off pretty well, for Elia himself added the function of an author to that of a scrivener, like myself.

I went the other day (not having seen him for a year) to laugh over with him at my usurpation of his name, and found him, alas! no more than a name, for he died of consumption eleven months ago, and I knew not of it.

So the name has fairly devolved to me, I think; and 'tis all he has left me.

Dear sir, yours truly,
C. LAMB.

Messrs Taylor & Hessey, Fleet Street,
for J. Taylor, Esq.

CCXLV. TO C. A. ELTON

India House
(to which place all letters addressed
to C. L. commonly come),
August 12 [?1821].

My dear Sir,—You have overwhelmed me with your favours. I have received positively a little library from Baldwyn's. I do not know how I have deserved such a bounty.

We have been up to the ear in classics ever since it came. I have been greatly pleased, but most, I think, with the Hesiod,—the Titan battle quite amazed me. Gad, it was no child's play—and then the homely aphorisms at the end of the works—how adroitly you have turned them! Can he be the same Hesiod who did the Titans? the latter is—

"—— wine
Which to madness does incline."

But to read the *Days and Works* is like eating nice brown bread, homely sweet and nutritive. Apollonius was new to me: I had confounded him with the conjuror of that name. Medea is glorious; but I cannot give up Dido. She positively is the only Fine Lady

of Antiquity: her courtesy to the Trojans is altogether queen-like. Eneas is a most disagreeable person: Ascanius a pretty young master. . . . Mezentius for my money—his dying speech shames Turpin—not the Archbishop, but the roadster of that name, I mean.

I have been ashamed to find how many names of classics (and more than their names) you have introduced me to, that before I was ignorant of.

Your commendation of Master Chapman arrideth me. Can any one read the pert, modern, Frenchified notes, etc., in Pope's translation, and contrast them with solemn weighty prefaces of Chapman, writing in full faith, as he evidently does, of the plenary inspiration of his author—worshipping his meanest scraps and relics as divine — without one sceptical misgiving of their authenticity, and doubt which was the properest to expound Homer to his countrymen. Reverend Chapman! you have read his hymn to Pan (the Homeric)—why, it is Milton's blank verse clothed with rhyme! *Paradise Lost* could scarce lose, could it be so accoutred.

I shall die in the belief that he has improved upon Homer, in the *Odyssey* in particular—the disclosure of Ulysses of himself to Alcinous—his previous behaviour at the song of the stern strife arising between Achilles and himself (how it raised him above the *Iliad* Ulysses!) —but you know all these things quite as well as I do. But what a deaf ear old C. would have turned to the doubters in Homer's real personality! He apparently believed all the fables of Homer's birth, etc., etc.

Those notes of Bryant have caused the greatest disorder in my brain-pan. Well, I will not flatter when I say that we have had two or three long evening's *good reading* out of your kind present.

I will say nothing of the tenderest parts in your own little volume, at the end of such slatternly scribble as this, but indeed they cost us some tears. I scrawl on because of interruptions every moment. You

guess how it is in a busy office—papers thrust into your hand when your hand is busiest—and every anti-classical disavocation.

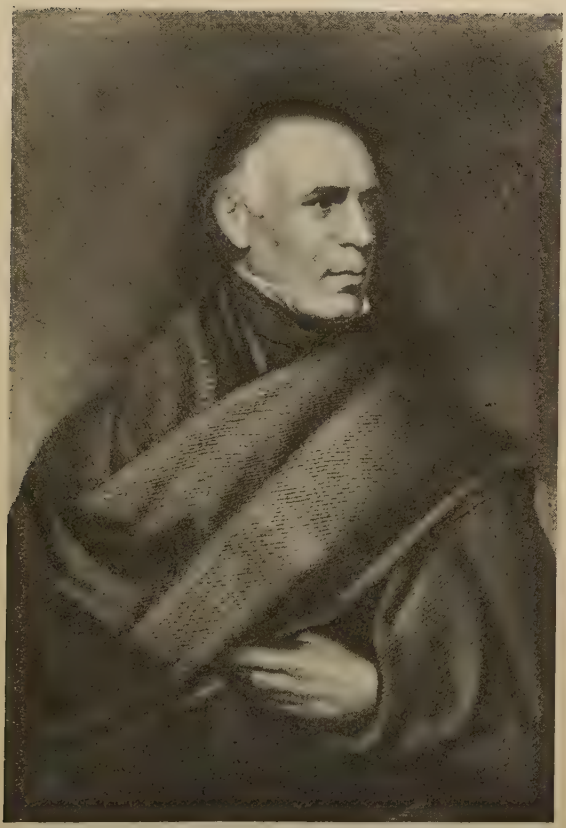
C. A. Elton, Esq.,
Clifton, Bristol.

CCXLVI. TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

My Dear Sir,—Your letter has lain in a drawer of my desk, upbraiding me every time I open the said drawer, but it is almost impossible to answer such a letter in such a place, and I am out of the habit of replying to epistles otherwhere than at office. You express yourself concerning H. like a true friend, and have made me feel that I have somehow neglected him, but without knowing very well how to rectify it. I live so remote from him—by Hackney—that he is almost out of the pale of visitation at Hampstead. And I come but seldom to Covent Garden this summer time—and when I do, am sure to pay for the late hours and pleasant Novello suppers which I incur. I also am an invalid. But I will hit upon some way, that you shall not have cause for your reproof in future. But do not think I take the hint unkindly. When I shall be brought low by any sickness or untoward circumstance, write just such a letter to some tardy friend of mine—or come up yourself with your friendly Henshaw face—and that will be better. I shall not forget in haste our casual day at Margate. May we have many such there or elsewhere! God bless you for your kindness to H., which I will remember. But do not show N. this, for the flouting infidel doth mock when Christians cry God bless us. Yours and *his*, *too*, and all our little circle's most affectionate

C. Lamb.

Mary's love included.



Allan Cunningham, from an engraving by J. Thomson, after the painting by H. Room.

CCXLVII. TO ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

[1821.]

Dear Sir,—Our friends of the Lond. M. meet at 20 Russell St., Covent Garden, this evening at a quarter before 7. I shall be disappointed if you are not among them.

Yours, with perfect sympathy,

C. LAMB.

Thursday.

CCXLVIII. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Tuesday 14 Aug. '21.

A rubber to-morrow evening at 8. Closed windows on account of the demise of her Majesty.

Russell House.

CCXLIX. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

India House,
19th Oct., '21.

My dear Sir,—I have to thank you for a fine hare, and, unless I am mistaken, for *two*. The first I received a week since, the account given with it was that it came from Mr Alfourd. I have no friend of that name, but two who come near to it, *Mr Talfourd*. So my gratitude must be divided between you, till I know the true sender. We are, and shall be, some time, I fear, at Dalston, a distance which does not improve hares by the circuitous route of Covent Garden, though for the sweetness of *this last* I will answer. We dress it to-day. I suppose you know my sister has been and is ill. I do not see much hopes, though there is a glimmer of her speedy recovery. When we are all well, I hope to come among our town friends, and shall have great pleasure in welcoming you from Beresford Hall. Yours and old Mr Walton's, and Honest Mr Cotton's,

Piscatorum Amicus,

C. L.

CCL. TO MR HESSEY OR MR TAYLOR

[Oct. 26, 1821.]

Dear Sir,—I send these slips, because I find them done, and want to get rid of them. I am most uneasily situated at home, and if what I expect, takes place, it may be long before I shall have any communications of the sort to send. I beg you will accept this brief token of good will, and leave me to myself and time to recover into a state for writing.

I am with best wishes for the Lond: Mag—

C. LAMB.

CCLI. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Dalston, 30 Oct. 1821.

My dear Ayrton,

I take your kindness very thankfully.—A bit of kindness at such times is precious. I am indeed in an uneasy state. But I think it well that the death of poor John should have happened at a time that my sister can be but half sensible to it. She is with me at Dalston, and I ventured on my own advice to acquaint her, as she was, with the worst, for what a communication should I have had to make upon her recovery! It does not seem much to have altered the state of her mind, and now she will gradually come to herself with nothing new to tell. Her illness has been very obstinate, but I am in no hurry for her to recover, that the idea may be in her mind as long as it can, before she is able to comprehend its weight. I am in a state of trial, but I do not lose myself. The funeral over, I must return to business. I understand your friendship in writing me to join you, but it would do me no good just now. I hope to meet you again with comparative cheerfulness in some few weeks.

Believe me, very sincerely yours,

CHAS. LAMB.

Kind love to Mrs A. and God bless you all.

CCLII. TO WILLIAM HONE

9 Nov., '21.

Dear Sir,—I was not very well nor in spirits when your pleasant note reached me, or should have noticed it sooner. Our Hebrew brethren seem to appreciate the good things of this life in more liberal latitude than we, to judge from their frequent graces. One, I think, you must have omitted: "After concluding a bargain." Their distinction of "Fruits growing upon trees," and "upon the ground," I can understand. A sow makes quite a different grunt (*her grace*) over chesnuts and pignuts. The last is a little above Elia. With thanks, and wishing grace be with you.

Yours, C. LAMB.

Mr Hone,
45, *Ludgate Hill.*

CCLIII. ALLSOP NOTES, UNDATED, BELONGING TO THE YEAR 1821

Dear Sir,—Thanks for the Birds and your kindness. It was but yesterday I was contriving with Talfourd to meet you half way at his chamber. But night don't do so well at present. I shall want to be home at Dalston by Eight.

I will pay an afternoon visit to you when you please. I dine at a chop-house at one always, but I can spend an hour with you after that. Would Saturday serve?

Yours truly,

C. L.

CCLIV.

Ecce iterum:

Dear Sir,—I fear I was obscure. I was plaguily busy when those tempting birds came. I meant to say I could not come this evening; but any other, if

I can know a day before, I can come for two or three afternoon hours, from a quarter to four to half past six. At present I cannot command more furlough. I have nam'd Saturday. I will come, if you don't countermand. I shall have dined. I have been wanting not not to see you.

C. L.

CCLV.

Thursday

Dear Sir,—I do not know whose fault it is we have not met so long. We are almost always out of town. You must come and beat up our quarters there, when we return from Cambridge. It is not in our power to accept your invitation. To-day we dine out; and set out for Cambridge on Saturday morning. Friday of course will be past in packing, &c., moreover we go from Dalston. We return from Cambridge in four weeks, and will contrive an early meeting. Meantime believe us,

Sincerely yours,

C. L., &c.

CCLVI.

India House.

Dear Sir,—I hear that you have called in Russell Street. I cannot say when I shall be in town. When I am, I must see you; I had hoped to have seen you at Dalston, but my Sister is taken ill, I am afraid will not be able to see any of her friends for a long time.

Believe me, yours truly,

C. Lamb.

CCLVII.

Monday Evening.

Dear Allsop, — We are going to Dalston on Wednesday. Will you come see the last of us to-morrow night—you and Mrs Allsop?

Yours truly,

C. Lamb.

CCLVIII.

Monday Evening.

Dear Allsop,—Your pheasant is glittering, but your company will be more acceptable this evening. Wordsworth is not with us, but the next things to him are.

C. LAMB.

CCLIX.

Tuesday.

D. A.,—I expect Procter and Wainwright (Janus W.) this evening: will you come? I suppose it is but a compliment to ask Mrs Allsop? but it is none to say that we should be glad to see her. Yours Ever.

C. L.

How vexed I am at your Dalston expedition.

CCLX. TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

March 9th, 1822.

Dear Coleridge,—It gives me great satisfaction to hear that the pig turned out so well: they are interesting creatures at a certain age. What a pity such buds should blow out into the maturity of rank bacon! You had all some of the crackling and brain sauce. Did you remember to rub it with butter, and gently dredge it a little, just before the crisis? Did the eyes come away kindly with no Œdipean avulsion? Was the crackling the colour of the ripe pomegranate? Had you no complement of boiled neck of mutton before it, to blunt the edge of delicate desire? Did you flesh maiden teeth in it? Not that *I* sent the pig, or can form the remotest guess what part Owen could play in the business. I never knew him give any thing away in my life. He would not begin with strangers. I suspect the pig, after all, was meant for me; but at the unlucky juncture of time being absent, the present somehow went round to Highgate. To

confess an honest truth, a pig is one of those things which I could never think of sending away. Teal, widgeon, snipes, barn-door fowls, ducks, geese—your tame villatic things—Welsh mutton, collars of brawn, sturgeon, fresh or pickled, your potted char, Swiss cheeses, French pies, early grapes, muscadines, I impart as freely unto my friends as to myself. They are but self-extended; but pardon me if I stop somewhere. Where the fine feeling of benevolence giveth a higher smack than the sensual rarity, there my friends (or any good man) may command me; but pigs are pigs, and I myself therein am nearest to myself. Nay, I should think it an affront, an undervaluing done to Nature who bestowed such a boon upon me, if in a churlish mood I parted with the precious gift. One of the bitterest pangs of remorse I ever felt was when a child—when my kind old aunt had strained her pocket-strings to bestow a sixpenny whole plum-cake upon me. In my way home through the Borough I met a venerable old man, not a mendicant, but thereabouts; a look-beggar, not a verbal petitionist; and in the coxcombry of taught charity I gave away the cake to him. I walked on a little in all the pride of an Evangelical peacock, when of a sudden my old aunt's kindness crossed me; the sum it was to her; the pleasure she had a right to expect that I—not the old imposter—should take in eating her cake; the ingratitude by which, under the colour of a Christian virtue, I had frustrated her cherished purpose. I sobbed, wept, and took it to heart so grievously, that I think I never suffered the like; and I was right. It was a piece of unfeeling hypocrisy, and it proved a lesson to me ever after. The cake has long been masticated, consigned to the dung-hill with the ashes of that unseasonable pauper.

But when Providence, who is better to us all than our aunts, gives me a pig, remembering my temptation

and my fall, I shall endeavour to act towards it more in the spirit of the donor's purpose.

Yours (short of pig) to command in every thing.

C. L.

CCLXI. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

March 20th, 1822.

My dear Wordsworth,—A letter from you is very grateful; I have not seen a Kendal postmark so long! We are pretty well, save colds and rheumatics, and a certain deadness to every thing, which I think I may date from poor John's loss, and another accident or two at the same time, that have made me almost bury myself at Dalston, where yet I see more faces than I could wish. Deaths overset one, and put one out long after the recent grief. Two or three have died within the last two twelvemonths, and so many parts of me have been numbed. One sees a picture, reads an anecdote, starts a casual fancy, and thinks to tell of it to this person in preference to every other: the person is gone whom it would have peculiarly suited. It won't do for another. Every departure destroys a class of sympathies. There's Captain Burney gone! What fun has whist now? What matters it what you lead, if you can no longer fancy him looking over you? One never hears any thing, but the image of the particular person occurs with whom alone almost you would care to share the intelligence. Thus one distributes oneself about; and now for so many parts of me I have lost the market. Common natures do not suffice me. Good people, as they are called, won't serve. I want individuals. I am made up of queer points, and I want so many answering needles. The going away of friends does not make the remainder more precious. It takes so much from them as there was a common link. A. B. and C. make a party. A. dies. B. not only loses A.; but all A's part in C. C. loses A's part in B.,

and so the alphabet sickens by subtraction of interchangeables. I express myself muddily, *capite dolente*. I have a dulling cold. My theory is to enjoy life, but my practice is against it. I grow ominously tired of official confinement. Thirty years have I served the Philistines, and my neck is not subdued to the yoke. You don't know how wearisome it is to breathe the air of four pent walls without relief, day after day, all the golden hours of the day between ten and four, without ease or interposition. *Tædet me harum quotidianarum formarum*, these pestilential clerk-faces always in one's dish. Oh for a few years between the grave and the desk!—they are the same, save that at the latter you are the outside machine. The foul enchanter ——, ("letters four do form his name"—Busirane is his name in hell,) that has curtailed you of some domestic comforts, hath laid a heavier hand on me, not in present infliction, but in taking away the hope of enfranchisement. I dare not whisper to myself a pension on this side of absolute incapacitation and infirmity, till years have sucked me dry;—*Otium cum indignitate*. I had thought in a green old age (Oh green thought!) to have retired to Ponder's End, (emblematic name, how beautiful!) in the Ware Road, there to have made up my accounts with Heaven and the company, toddling about between it and Cheshunt; anon stretching, on some fine Izaak Walton morning, to Hoddesdon or Amwell, careless as a beggar; but walking, walking ever till I fairly walked myself off my legs, dying walking! The hope is gone. I sit like Philomel all day (but not singing), with my breast against this thorn of a desk, with the only hope that some pulmonary affliction may relieve me. *Vide* Lord Palmerston's report of the clerks in the War Office, (Debates in this morning's *Times*,) by which it appears, in twenty years as many clerks have been coughed and catarrhed out of it into their freer graves. Thank you for asking

about the pictures. Milton hangs over my fire-side in Covent Garden, (when I am there,) the rest have been sold for an old song, wanting the eloquent tongue that should have set them off! You have gratified me with liking my meeting with Dodd. For the Malvolio story—the thing is become in verity a sad task, and I eke it out with any thing. If I could slip out of it I should be happy, but our chief-reputed assistants have forsaken us. The Opium-Eater crossed us once with a dazzling path, and hath as suddenly left us darkling; and, in short, I shall go on from dull to worse, because I cannot resist the booksellers' importunity—the old plea you know of authors, but I believe on my part sincere. Hartley I do not so often see: but I never see him in unwelcome hour. I thoroughly love and honour him. I send you a frozen epistle, but it is Winter and dead time of the year with me. May heaven keep something like Spring and Summer up with you, strengthen your eyes, and make mine a little lighter to encounter with them, as I hope they shall yet and again, before all are closed.

Yours, with every kind remembrance.

C. L.

I had almost forgot to say, I think you thoroughly right about presentation copies. I should like to see you print a book I should grudge to purchase for its size. Hang me, but I would have it though!

Mary perfectly approves of the appropriation of the *feathers*, and wishes them peacock's for your fair niece's sake.

CCLXII. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

May 16, 1822.

Dear Godwin,—I sincerely feel for all your trouble.

Pray use the enclosed £50, and pay me when you can. I shall make it my business to see you very shortly.—

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCLXIII. TO WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH

Tuesday 7 May '22.

Dear Sir,—I have read your poetry with pleasure. The tales are pretty and prettily told, the language often finely poetical. It is only sometimes a little careless, I mean as to redundancy. I have marked certain passages (in pencil only, which will easily obliterate) for your consideration. Excuse this liberty. For the distinction you offer me of a dedication, I feel the honour of it, but I do not think it would advantage the publication. I am hardly on an eminence enough to warrant it. The Reviewers, who are no friends of mine—the two big ones especially who make a point of taking no notice of anything I bring out—may take occasion by it to decry us both. But I leave you to your own judgment. Perhaps, if you wish to give me a kind word, it will be more appropriate *before your republication of Tourneur*.

The "Specimens" would give a handle to it, which the poems might seem to want. But I submit it to yourself with the old recollection that "beggars should not be chusers" and remain with great respect and wishing success to both your publications

Your obedient Servant,

C. LAMB.

No hurry at all for Tourneur.

[*Endorsed*]

W. H. Ainsworth Esq.

CCLXIV. TO HARWOOD HOLCROFT

Do not come to us on Thursday, for we are moved into country lodgings, tho' I am still at the India

W. Harrison Ainsworth, from an engraving by S. Freeman, after the picture by D. Maclise, R.A.

house in the mornings. See Marshall and Captain Betham *as soon as ever you can.* I fear leave cannot be obtained at the India House for your going to India. If you go it must be as captain's clerk, if such a thing could be obtain'd.

For God's sake keep your present place and do not give it up, or neglect it; as you perhaps will not be able to go to India, and you see how difficult of attainment situations are.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCLXV. TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

[About 1822.]

Mary has left a little space for me to fill up with nonsense, as the geographers used to cram monsters in the voids of the maps, and call it Terra Incognita. She has told you how she has taken to water like a hungry otter. I too limp after her in lame imitation, but it goes against me a little at first. I have been acquaintance with it now for full four days, and it seems a moon. I am full of cramps, and rheumatisms, and cold internally, so that fire won't warm me; yet I bear all for virtue's sake. Must I then leave you, gin, rum, brandy, aqua-vitæ, pleasant jolly fellows? Hang temperance, and he that first invented it!—some Anti-Noahite. C—— has powdered his head, and looks like Bacchus, Bacchus ever sleek and young. He is going to turn sober, but his clock has not struck yet; meantime he pours down goblet after goblet, the second to see where the first is gone, the third to see no harm happens to the second, a fourth to say there is another coming, and a fifth to say he is not sure he is the last.

CCLXVI. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER TO HIS SISTER

[1822.]

". . . Then you must walk all along the borough side of the Seine, facing the Tuileries. There is a mile and a half of print shops and Bookstalls. If the latter were but English! Then there is a place where the Paris people put all the dead people, and bring them flowers and dolls, and gingerbread nuts, and sonnets, and such trifles; and that is all, I think worth seeing as sights, except that the streets and shops of Paris are themselves the best sight."

CCLXVII. TO JOHN CLARE

India House, 31st Aug. 1822.

Dear Clare,—I thank you heartily for your present. I am an inveterate old Londoner, but while I am among your choice collections I seem to be native to them and free of the country. The quantity of your observation has astonished me. What have most pleased me have been "Recollections after a Ramble," and those "Grongar Hill" kind of pieces in eight-syllable lines, my favourite measure, such as "Cowper Hill" and "Solitude." In some of your story-telling ballads the provincial phrases sometimes startle me. I think you are too profuse with them. In poetry, *slang* of every kind is to be avoided. There is a rustic Cockneyism as little pleasing as ours of London. Transplant Arcadia to Helpstone. The true rustic style, the Arcadian English, I think is to be found in Shenstone. Would his "Schoolmistress," the prettiest of poems, have been better if he had used quite the Goody's own language? Now and then a home rusticism is fresh and startling, but where nothing is gained in expression it is out of tenor. It may make folks smile and stare, but the ungenial coalition of barbarous with refined phrases will prevent you in the end from being so generally tasted as you deserve to be. Excuse my freedom, and take the same liberty with my *puns*.

I send you two little volumes of my spare hours. They are of all sorts. There's a Methodist hymn for Sundays, and a farce for Saturday night. Pray give them a place on your shelf, and accept a little volume of which I have duplicate, that I may return in equal number to your welcome present.

I think I am indebted to you for a sonnet in the "London" for August.

Since I saw you I have been in France and have eaten frogs. The nicest little rabbity things you ever tasted. Do look about for them. Make Mrs Clare pick off the hind quarters; boil them plain with parsley and butter. The fore quarters are not so good. She may let them hop off by themselves.

Yours sincerely,
CHAS. LAMB.

CCLXVIII. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Sept. 5, 1822.

Dear A.

A dim notion dawns upon my drunken caput, that last night you made an engagement for me at your house on Monday; it may be all a fiction; but if you did, pray change it to some *Evening* between that day and Saturday—not *Saturday*.

It is impossible for me to come on Monday.

If it is all delusion, forgive the harmless vanity.

I want that magazine you took away, if *you* took it.

This is a mere hypothetical Epistle.

C. LAMB.

Thursday, some day in Sept.

CCLXIX. TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

Dear Payne,—A friend and fellow-clerk of mine, Mr White (a good fellow) coming to your parts, I would fain have accompanied him, but am forced instead to send a part of me, verse and prose, most of

it from twenty to thirty years old, such as I then was, and I am not much altered.

Paris, which I hardly knew whether I liked when I was in it, is an object of no small magnitude with me now. I want to be going, to the Jardin des Plantes (is that right, Louisa?) with you—to Pere de la Chaise, La Morgue, and all the sentimentalities. How is Talma, and his (my) dear Shakspeare?

N.B.—My friend White knows Paris thoroughly, and does not want a guide. We did, and had one. We both join in thanks. Do you remember a Blue-Silk Girl (English) at the Luxembourg, that did not much seem to attend to the Pictures, who fell in love with you, and whom I fell in love with—an inquisitive, prying, curious Beauty—where is she?

Votre Tres Humble Serviteur,

Charlois Agneau,

alias C. Lamb.

Guichy is well, and much as usual. He seems blind to all the distinctions of life, except to those of sex. Remembrance to Kenney, and Poole.

CCLXX. TO BERNARD BARTON

India House, 11th Sept. 1822.

Dear Sir,—You have misapprehended me sadly, if you suppose that I meant to impute any inconsistency (in your writing poetry) with your religious profession. I do not remember what I said, but it was spoken sportively, I am sure. One of my levities, which you are not so used to as my older friends. I probably was thinking of the light in which your so indulging yourself would appear to *Quakers*, and put their objection in my own foolish mouth. I would eat my words (provided they should be written on not very coarse paper) rather than I would throw cold water upon your, and my once, harmless occupation.

I have read "Napoleon" and the rest with delight.

I like them for what they are, and for what they are not. I have sickened on the modern rhodomontade and Byronism, and your plain Quakerish Beauty has captivated me. It is all wholesome cates, aye, and toothsome too, and withal Quakerish. If I were George Fox, and George Fox Licenser of the press, they should have my absolute *imprimatur*. I hope I have removed the impression.

I am, like you, a prisoner to the desk. I have been chained to that galley thirty years,—a long shot. I have almost grown to the wood. If no imaginative poet, I am sure I am a figurative one. Do "Friends" allow puns? *verbal* equivocations? They are unjustly accused of it; and I did my little best in the "Imperfect Sympathies" to vindicate them. I am very tired of clerking it, but have no remedy. Did you see a Sonnet to this purpose in the *Examiner*?—

> "*Who* first invented work, and bound the free
> And holy-day rejoicing spirit down
> To the ever-haunting importunity
> Of business, in the green fields, and the town,—
> To plough—loom—anvil—spade—and, oh, most sad,
> To that dry drudgery of the desk's dead wood?
> Who but the Being unblest, alien from good,
> Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
> Task ever plies, 'mid rotatory burnings,
> That round and round incalculably reel—
> For wrath Divine hath made him like a wheel—
> In that red realm from which are no returnings;
> Where toiling and turmoiling ever and aye,
> He and his Thoughts keep pensive worky-day."

I fancy the sentiment exprest above will be nearly your own. The expression of it probably would not so well suit with a follower of John Woolman. But I do not know whether diabolism is a part of your creed, or where indeed to find an exposition of your creed at all. In feelings and matters not dogmatical, I hope I am half a Quaker. Believe me, with great respect, yours, C. L.

I shall always be happy to see, or hear from you.

CCLXXI. TO BARRON FIELD

September 22, 1822.

My dear F.,—I scribble hastily at office—Frank wants my letter presently—I and Sister are just returned from Paris!! We have eaten frogs. It has been such a treat. You know our monotonous general tenor. Frogs are the nicest little delicate things — rabbity - flavor'd — Imagine a Lilliputian rabbit—They fricassee them, but in my mind, drest seethed—plain, with parsley and butter, would have been the decision of Apicius. Shelley the great Atheist has gone down by Water to Eternal fire. Hunt and his young fry are left stranded at Pisa, to be adopted by the remaining duumvir Lord Byron, he, wife, and six children and their maid. What a cargo of Jonases, if they had founder'd too. The only use I can find of friends, is that they do to borrow money of you—Henceforth I will consort with none but rich rogues. Paris is a glorious picturesque old city. London looks mean and new to it, as the town of Washington would, seen after *it*. But they have no St Paul's, or Westminster Abbey. The Seine, so much despised by Cockneys, is exactly the size to run thro' a magnificent street, palaces a mile long on one side, lofty Edinbro' stone (O the glorious antiques!) Houses on the other. The Thames disunites London and Southwark. I had Talma to supper with me. He has picked up, as I believe, an authentic portrait of Shakspere. He paid a broker about £40 English for it. It is painted on the one half of a pair of Bellows,—a lovely picture, corresponding with the Folio Head. The Bellows has old carved *wings* round it, and round the visnomy is inscrib'd, near as I remember, not divided into rhyme; I found out the rhyme,

> "Whom have we here
> Stuck on the bellows,
> But the Prince of good fellows,
> Willy Shakspere?"

At top

> "O base and coward luck,
> To be here stuck."—POINS.

At bottom

> "Nay rather a glorious lot is to him assign'd,
> Who like the Almighty, rides upon the *wind*."—PISTOL.

This is all in old carved wooden letters. The countenance smiling sweet and intellectual beyond measure, even as He was immeasurable. It may be a forgery. They laugh at me and tell me Ireland is in Paris, and has been putting off a Portrait of the Black Prince. How far old wood can be imitated I cannot say. Ireland was not found out by his Parchments, but his Poetry. I am confident no Painter on either side the Channel could have painted anything near like the face I saw. Again, would such a Painter and forger have expected £40 for a thing, if authentic, worth £4000? Talma is not in the secret, for he had not even found out the Rhymes in the first inscription. He is coming over with it, and my life to Southey's Thalaba, it will gain universal faith.

The Letter is wanted and I am wanted. Imagine the Blank filled up with all kind things.

Our joint hearty remembrances to both of you.

Yours as ever, C. LAMB.

CCLXXII. TO BERNARD BARTON

East India House, 9th Oct., 1822.

Dear Sir,—I am asham'd not sooner to have acknowledged your letter and poem. I think the latter very temperate, very serious, and very seasonable. I do not think it will convert the club at Pisa, neither do I think it will satisfy the bigots on our side the water. Something like a parody on the song of Ariel would please them better:—

> Full fathom five the Atheist lies,
> Of his bones are hell-dice made.

I want time, or fancy, to fill up the rest. I sincerely sympathize with you on your doleful confinement. Of Time, Health, and Riches, the first in order is not last in excellence. Riches are chiefly good, because they give us Time. What a weight of wearisome prison hours have I to look back and forward to, as quite cut out of life—and the sting of the thing is, that for six hours every day, I have no business which I could not contract into two, if they would let me work Task-work. I shall be glad to hear that your grievance is mitigated.

Shelley I saw once. His voice was the most obnoxious squeak I ever was tormented with, ten thousand times worse than the Laureat's, whose voice is the worst part about him, except his Laureatcy. Lord Byron opens upon him on Monday in a Parody (I suppose) of the *Vision of Judgment*, in which latter the Poet I think did not much show *his*. To award his Heaven and his Hell in the presumptuous manner he has done, was a piece of immodesty as bad as Shelleyism.

I am returning a poor letter. I was formerly a great scribbler in that way, but my hand is out of order. If I said my head too, I should not be very much out, but I will tell no tales of myself. I will therefore end, (after my best thanks, with a hope to see you again some time in London,) begging you to accept this Letteret for a Letter—a Leveret makes a better present than a grown hare, and short troubles (as the old excuse goes) are best.

I hear that C. Lloyd is well, and has returned to his family. I think this will give you pleasure to hear.

I remain, dear sir, yours truly,

C. Lamb.

CCLXXIII. TO BENJAMIN R. HAYDON

India House, 19th Oct., 1822.

Dear Haydon,—Poor Godwin has been turned out of his home and business in Skinner Street, and if he does not pay two years' arrears of rent, he will have the whole stock, furniture, &c., of his new house (in the Strand) seized when term begins. We are trying to raise a subscription for him. My object in writing this is simply to ask you if this is a kind of case which would be likely to interest Mrs Coutts in his behalf, and *who* in your opinion is the best person to speak with her on his behalf. Without the aid of from £300 to £400, by that time, early in November he must be ruined. You are the only person I can think of, of her acquaintance, and can, perhaps, if not yourself, recommend the person most likely to influence her. Shelley had engaged to clear him of all demands and he has since turned out to be deeply insolvent.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Is Sir Walter to be applied to and by what channel?

CCLXXIV. TO THE SAME

Tuesday, 29.

Dear H.,—I have written a very respectful letter to Sir W. S. Godwin did not write, because he leaves all to his Committee, as I will explain to you. If this rascally weather holds you will see but one of us on that day.

Yours, with many thanks,

CHARLES LAMB.

CCLXXV. TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

1822—Thursday.

Ali Pacha will do. I sent my sister the first night, not having been able to go myself, and her report of

its effect was most favorable. I saw it last night—the third night—and it was most satisfactorily received. I have been sadly disappointed in Talfourd, who does the critiques in the "Times," and who promised his strenuous services, but by some damn'd arrangement, he was sent to the wrong house, and a most iniquitous account of Ali substituted for his, which I am sure would have been a kind one. The "Morning Herald" did it ample justice, without appearing to puff it. It is an abominable misrepresentation of the "Times," that Farren played Ali like Lord Ogilby. He acted infirmity of body, but not of voice or purpose. His manner was even grand. A grand old gentleman. His falling to the earth when his son's death was announced, was fine as anything I ever saw. It was as if he had been blasted. Miss Foote looked helpless and beautiful, and greatly helped the piece. It is going on steadily, I am sure, for *many nights*. Marry, I was a little disappointed with Hassan, who tells us he subsists by cracking court jests before Hali, but he made none. In all the rest, scenery and machinery, it was faultless. I hope it will bring you here. I should be most glad of that. I have a room for you, and you shall order your own dinner three days in the week. I must retain my own authority for the rest. As far as magazines go, I can answer for Talfourd in the "New Monthly." He cannot be put out there. But it is established as a favorite, and can do without these expletives. I long to talk over with you the Shakspeare Picture. My doubts of its being a forgery mainly rest upon the goodness of the picture. The bellows might be trumped up, but where did the painter spring from? Is Ireland a consummate artist—or any of Ireland's accomplices?—but we shall confer upon it, I hope. The "New Times," I understand, was favorable to Ali, but I have not seen it. I am sensible of the want of method in this letter, but I have been deprived of the con-

necting organ, by a practice I have fallen into since I left Paris, of taking too much strong spirits of a night. I must return to the Hotel de l'Europe, and Macon.

How is Kenney? Have you seen my friend White? What is Poole about, &c.? Do not write, but come and answer me.

The weather is charming, and there is a mermaid to be seen in London. You may not have the opportunity of inspecting such a *Poisarde* once again in ten centuries.

My sister joins me in the hope of seeing you.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCLXXVI. TO THE SAME

Wednsday, 13 Nov., '22.

Dear P.—Owing to the inconvenience of having two lodgings, I did not get your letter quite as soon as I should. The India House is my proper address, where I am sure for the fore part of every day. The instant I got it, I addressed a letter, for Kemble to see to my friend Henry Robertson, the Treasurer of Covent Garden Theater. He had a conference with Kemble, and the result is, that Robertson, in the name of the management, recognized to me the full ratifying of your bargain: £250 for Ali, the Slaves, and another piece which they had not received. He assures me the whole will be paid you, or the proportion for the two former, as soon as ever the Treasury will permit it. He offered to write the same to you, if I pleased. He thinks in a month or so they will be able to liquidate it. He is positive no trick could be meant you, as Mr Planche's alterations, which were trifling, were not at all considered as affecting your bargain. With respect to the copyright of Ali, he was of opinion no money would be given for it, as Ali is quite laid aside. This explana-

tion being given, you would not think of printing the two copies together by way of recrimination. He told me the secret of the two Galley Slaves at Drury Lane. Elliston, if he is informed right, engaged Poole to translate it, but before Poole's translation arrived, finding it coming out at Cov. Gar., he procured copies of two several translations of it in London. So you see here are four translations, reckoning yours. I fear no copy-right would be got for it, for anybody may print it, and anybody has. Your's has run seven nights, and R. is of opinion it will not exceed in number of nights the nights of Ali,—about thirteen. But your full right to your bargain with the management is in the fullest manner recognized by him officially. He gave me every hope the money will be spared as soon as they can spare it. He said *a month or two*, but seemed to me to mean about *a month*. A new lady is coming out in Juliet, to whom they look very confidently for replenishing their treasury. Robertson is a very good fellow and I can rely upon his statement. Should you have any more pieces, and want to get a copy-right for them I am the worst person to negotiate with any bookseller, having been cheated by all I have had to do with (except Taylor and Hessey,—but they do not publish theatrical pieces), and I know not how to go about it or who to apply to. But if you had no better negotiator, I should know the minimum you expect, for I should not like to make a bargain out of my own head, being, (after the Duke of Wellington) the worst of all negotiators. I find from Robertson you have written to Bishop on the subject. Have you named anything of the copyright of the Slaves? R. thinks no publisher would pay for it, and you would not risque it on your own account. This is a mere business letter, so I will just send my love to my little wife at Versailles, to her dear mother, etc.

Believe me, yours truly, C. L.

CCLXXVII. TO JOHN TAYLOR

Dec. 7, 1822.

Dear Sir,—I should like the enclosed Dedication to be printed, unless you dislike it. I like it. It is in the olden style. But if you object to it, put forth the book as it is; only pray don't let the printer mistake the word *curt* for *curst*.

C. L

DEDICATION

TO THE FRIENDLY AND JUDICIOUS READER,

who will take these Papers, as they were meant; not understanding every thing perversely in its absolute and literal sense, but giving fair construction, as to an after-dinner conversation; allowing for the rashness and necessary incompleteness of first thoughts; and not remembering, for the purpose of an after taunt, words spoken peradventure after the fourth glass, the Author wishes (what he would will for himself) plenty of good friends to stand by him, good books to solace him, prosperous events to all his honest undertakings, and a candid interpretation to his most hasty words and actions. The other sort (and he hopes many of them will purchase his book too) he greets with the curt invitation of Timon, "Uncover, dogs, and lap": or he dismisses them with the confident security of the philosopher,—"you beat but on the case of Elia."

On better consideration, pray omit that Dedication. The Essays want no Preface: they are *all Preface*. A Preface is nothing but a talk with the reader; and they do nothing else. Pray omit it.

There will be a sort of Preface in the next Magazine, which may act as an advertisement, but not proper for the volume.

Let ELIA come forth bare as he was born.

C. L.

Messrs Taylor & Hessey,
Booksellers, Fleet Street.

N.B. *No* Preface.

CCLXXVIII. TO WALTER WILSON

E. I. H. 16th Dec. 1822.

Dear Wilson,—*Lightning* I was going to call you. You must have thought me negligent in not answering your letter sooner. But I have a habit of never writing letters but at the office; 'tis so much time cribbed out of the Company: and I am just got out of the thick of a tea-sale, in which most of the entry of notes, deposits, &c., usually falls to my share.

I have nothing of De Foe's but two or three novels and the "Plague History." I can give you no information about him. As a slight general character of what I remember of them, (for I have not looked into them latterly,) I would say that in the appearance of *truth*, in all the incidents and conversations that occur in them, they exceed any works of fiction I am acquainted with. It is perfect illusion. The *author* never appears in these self-narratives, (for so they ought to be called, or rather autobiographies,) but the *narrator* chains us down to an implicit belief in every thing he says. There is all the minute detail of a log-book in it. Dates are painfully pressed upon the memory. Facts are repeated over and over in varying phases, till you cannot choose but believe them. It is like reading evidence given in a court of justice. So anxious the story-teller seems that the truth should be clearly comprehended, that when he has told us a matter of fact or a motive, in a line or two farther down he *repeats* it, with his favourite figure of speech, "I say," so and so, though he had made it abundantly plain before. This is in imitation of the common people's way of speaking, or rather of the way in which they are addressed by a master or mistress, who wishes to impress something upon their memories, and has a wonder-

ful effect upon matter-of-fact readers. Indeed it is to such principally that he writes. His style is everywhere beautiful, but plain and *homely* Robinson Crusoe is delightful to all ranks and classes, but it is easy to see that it is written in phraseology peculiarly adapted to the lower conditions of readers; hence it is an especial favourite with seafaring men, poor boys, servant-maids, &c. His novels are capital kitchen-reading, while they are worthy, from their deep interest, to find a shelf in the libraries of the wealthiest and the most learned. His passion for *matter-of-fact narrative* sometimes betrayed him into a long relation of common incidents, which might happen to any man, and have no interest but the intense appearance of truth in them, to commend them. The whole latter half or two-thirds of "Colonel Jack" is of this description. The beginning of "Colonel Jack" is the most affecting natural picture of a young thief that was ever drawn. His losing the stolen money in the hollow of a tree, and finding it again when he was in despair, and then being in equal distress at not knowing how to dispose of it, and several similar touches in the early history of the Colonel, evince a deep knowledge of human nature; and putting out of question the superior *romantic* interest of the latter, in my mind very much exceed Crusoe. "Roxana" (first edition) is the next in interest, though he left out the best part of it in subsequent editions from a foolish hypercriticism of his friend Southerne. But "Moll Flanders," the "Account of the Plague," &c., are all of one family, and have the same stamp of character. Believe me, with friendly recollections, *Brother*, (as I used to call you,)

Yours,

C. Lamb.

CCLXXIX. TO BERNARD BARTON

Dec. 23rd, 1822.

Dear Sir,—I have been so distracted with business and one thing or other, I have not had a quiet quarter of an hour for epistolary purposes. Christmas, too, is come, which always puts a rattle into my morning skull. It is a visiting unquiet unQuakerish season. I get more and more in love with solitude, and proportionately hampered with company. I hope you have some holidays at this period. I have one day, Christmas Day, alas! too few to commemorate the season. All work and no play dulls me. Company is not play, but many times hard work. To play, is for a man to do what he please, or to do nothing—to go about soothing his particular fancies. I have lived to a time of life to have outlived the good hours, the nine o'clock suppers, with a bright hour or two to clear up in afterwards. Now you cannot get tea before that hour, and then sit gaping, music-bother'd perhaps, till half-past 12 brings up the tray, and what you steal of convivial enjoyment after is heavily paid for in the disquiet of to-morrow's head.

I am pleased with your liking *John Woodvil*, and amused with your knowledge of our drama being confined to Shakspeare and Miss Baillie. What a world of fine territory between Land's End and Johnny Groat's have you missed traversing. I almost envy you to have so much to read. I feel as if I had read all the Books I want to read. O to forget Fielding, Steele, &c., and read 'em new.

Can you tell me a likely place where I could pick up cheap Fox's Journal? There are no Quaker Circulating Libraries? Elwood, too, I must have—I rather grudge that S[outhe]y has taken up the history of your people. I am afraid he will put in some levity. I am afraid I am not quite exempt from that fault in certain magazine Articles, where I have introduced mention of them. Were they to do again, I would reform them.

Why should not you write a poetical Account of your old worthies, deducing them from Fox to Woolman? But I remember you did talk of something of that kind, as a counterpart to the "Ecclesiastical Sketches." But would not a Poem be more consecutive than a string of Sonnets? You have no Martyrs *quite to the Fire*, I think, among you; but plenty of Heroic Confessors, Spirit-Martyrs, Lamb-Lions—think of it.

It would be better than a series of sonnets on "Eminent Bankers." I like a hit at our way of life, though it does well for me, better than any thing short of *all one's time to one's self*; for which alone I rankle with envy at the rich. Books are good, and Pictures are good, and Money to buy them therefore good, but to buy *time*! in other words, life—

The "compliments of the time" to you should end my letter; to a Friend, I suppose, I must say the "sincerity of the season"; I hope they both mean the same. With excuses for this hastily-penn'd note, believe me, with great respect—

C. LAMB.

CCLXXX. TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

1822.

Dear Miss Wordsworth,—I had just written the above endearing words when Monkhouse tapped me on the shoulder with an invitation to cold goose pie, which I was not bird of that sort enough to decline. Mrs M——, I am most happy to say, is better. Mary has been tormented with rheumatism, which is leaving her. I am suffering from the festivities of the season. I wonder how my misused carcass holds it out. I have played the experimental philosopher on it, that's certain. Willy shall be welcome to a mince-pie, and a bout at commerce whenever he comes. He was in our eye. I am glad you liked my new year's speculations: every body likes them,

except the author of the *Pleasures of Hope*. Disappointment attend him! How I like to be liked, and *what I do* to be liked! They flatter me in magazines, newspapers, and all the minor reviews; the Quarterlies hold aloof. But they must come into it in time, or their leaves be waste paper. Salute Trinity Library in my name. Two special things are worth seeing at Cambridge, a portrait of Cromwell, at Sydney, and a better of Dr Harvey (who found out that blood was red), at Dr Davy's; you should see them. Coleridge is pretty well. I have not seen him, but hear often of him from Allsop, who sends me hares and pheasants twice a week; I can hardly take so fast as he gives. I have almost forgotten butcher's meat, as plebeian. Are you not glad the cold is gone? I find Winters not so agreeable as they used to be "when Winter bleak had charms for me." I cannot conjure up a kind similitude for those snowy flakes. Let them keep to twelfth cakes!

Mrs Paris, our Cambridge friend, has been in town. You do not know the Watfords in Trumpington Street. They are capital people. Ask any body you meet who is the biggest woman in Cambridge, and I'll hold you a wager they'll say Mrs Smith. She broke down two benches in Trinity gardens, one on the confines of St John's, which occasioned a litigation between the Societies as to repairing it. In warm weather she retires into an ice-cellar, (literally!) and dates the returns of the years from a hot Thursday some twenty years back. She sits in a room with opposite doors and windows, to let in a thorough draught, which gives her slenderer friends tooth-aches. She is to be seen in the market every morning, at ten, cheapening fowls, which I observe the Cambridge poulterers are not sufficiently careful to stump.

Having now answered most of the points contained in your letter, let me end with assuring you of our

very best kindness, and excuse Mary from not handling the pen on this occasion, especially as it has fallen into so much better hands! Will Dr W. accept of my respects at the end of a foolish letter?

C. L.

CCLXXXI. TO —— DIBDIN, ESQ.

1822.

It is hard when a gentleman cannot remain concealed, who affecteth obscurity with greater avidity than most do seek to have their good deeds brought to light—to have a prying inquisitive finger (to the danger of its own scorching), busied in removing the little peck measure (scripturally a bushel) under which one had hoped to bury his small candle. The receipt of fern-seed, I think, in this curious age, would scarce help a man to walk invisible.

Well, I am discovered—and thou thyself, who thoughtest to shelter under the pease-cod of initiality (a stale and shallow device), art no less dragged to light. Thy slender anatomy—thy skeletonian D——fleshed and sinewed out to the plump expansion of six characters—thy tuneful genealogy deduced.

By the way, what a name is Timothy!

Lay it down, I beseech thee, and in its place take up the properer sound of Timotheus.

Then mayst thou with unblushing fingers handle the Lyre "familiar to the D——n name."

With much difficulty have I traced thee to thy lurking-place. Many a goodly name did I run over, bewildered between Dorrien, and Doxat, and Dover, and Dakin, and Daintry—a wilderness of D's—till at last I thought I had hit it—my conjectures wandering upon a melancholy Jew—you wot the Israelite upon 'Change—Master Daniels—a contemplative Hebrew—to the which guess I was the rather led, by the consideration that most of his nation are great readers.

Nothing is so common as to see them in the Jews'

Walk, with a bundle of scrip in one hand, and the *Man of Feeling*, or a volume of Sterne in the other.

I am a rogue if I can collect what manner of face thou carriest, though thou seemest so familiar with mine. If I remember, thou didst not dimly resemble the man Daniels, whom at first I took thee for—a careworn, mortified, economical, commercio-political countenance, with an agreeable limp in thy gait, if Elia mistake thee not. I think I should shake hands with thee, if I met thee.

CCLXXXII. TO CHARLES LLOYD

[About 1822.]

Your lines are not to be understood reading on one leg. They are sinuous, and to be won with wrestling. I do assure you in sincerity that nothing you have done has given me greater satisfaction. Your obscurity, where you are dark, which is seldom, is that of too much meaning, not the painful obscurity which no toil of the reader can dissipate; not the dead vacuum and floundering place in which imagination finds no footing: it is not the dimness of positive darkness, but of distance; and he that reads and not discerns must get a better pair of spectacles. I admire every piece in the collection. I cannot say the first is best: when I do so, the last read rises up in judgment. To your Mother, to your Sister, to Mary dead, they are all weighty with thought and tender with sentiment. Your poetry is like no other. Those cursed dryads and pagan trumperies of modern verse have put me out of conceit of the very name of poetry. Your verses are as good and as wholesome as prose, and I have made a sad blunder if I do not leave you with an impression that your present is rarely valued.

CHARLES LAMB.

CCLXXXIII. TO MR AND MRS BRUTON

Twelfth Day, '23.

The pig was above my feeble praise. It was a dear pigmy. There was some contention as to who should have the ears; but, in spite of his obstinacy, (deaf as these little creatures are to advice,) I contrived to get at one of them.

It came in boots too, which I took as a favour. Generally these pretty toes, pretty toes! are missing; but I suppose he wore them to look taller.

He must have been the least of his race. His little foots would have gone into the silver slipper. I take him to have been a Chinese and a female.

If Evelyn could have seen him, he would never have farrowed two such prodigious volumes; seeing how much good can be contained in—how small a compass!

He crackled delicately.

I left a blank at the top of my letter, not being determined which to address it to: so farmer and farmer's wife will please to divide our thanks. May your granaries be full, and your rats empty, and your chickens plump, and your envious neighbours lean, and your labourers busy, and you as idle and as happy as the day is long!

VIVE L'AGRICULTURE!

How do you make your pigs so little?
They are vastly engaging at the age:
I was so myself.
Now I am a disagreeable old hog,
A middle-aged gentleman-and-a-half,
My faculties (thank God!) are not much impaired.

I have my sight, hearing, taste, pretty perfect; and can read the Lord's Prayer in common type, by the help of a candle, without making many mistakes.

Believe me, that while my faculties last, I shall ever cherish a proper appreciation of your many kindnesses

in this way, and that the last lingering relish of past favours upon my dying memory will be the smack of that little ear. It was the left ear, which is lucky. Many happy returns, not of the pig, but of the New Year, to both! Mary, for her share of the pig and the memoirs, desires to send the same.

Yours truly,

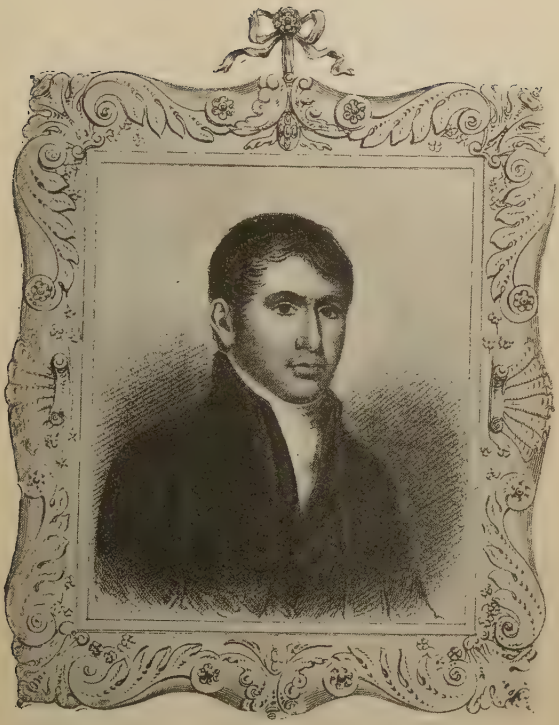
C. Lamb.

CCLXXXIV. TO BERNARD BARTON

January 9th, 1823.

"Throw yourself on the world without any rational plan of support, beyond what the chance employ of booksellers would afford you!!!"

Throw yourself rather, my dear Sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock slap-dash headlong upon iron spikes. If you had but five consolatory minutes between the desk and the bed, make much of them, and live a century in them, rather than turn slave to the Booksellers. They are Turks and Tartars, when they have poor authors at their beck. Hitherto you have been at arm's length from them. Come not within their grasp. I have known many authors [want] for bread, some repining, others envying the blessed security of a Counting House, all agreeing they would rather have been Tailors, Weavers, what not! rather than the things they were. I have known some starved, some to go mad, one dear friend literally dying in a workhouse. You know not what a rapacious, dishonest set these booksellers are. Ask even Southey, who (a single case almost) has made a fortune by book drudgery, what he has found them. O you know not, may you never know! the miseries of subsisting by authorship. 'Tis a pretty appendage to a situation like yours or mine, but a slavery, worse than all slavery, to be a booksellers' dependant, to drudge your brains for pots of ale and breasts of mutton, to change your free thoughts and voluntary



Bernard Barton,
from the engraving by R. Cooper.

numbers for ungracious task-work. Those fellows hate *us*. The reason I take to be, that contrary to other trades, in which the Master gets all the credit, (a Jeweller or Silversmith for instance,) and the Journeyman, who really does the fine work, is in the back-ground: in *our* work the world gives all the credit to us, whom *they* consider as *their* journeymen, and therefore do they hate us, and cheat us, and oppress us, and would wring the blood of us out to put another sixpence in their mechanic pouches! I contend that a Bookseller has a *relative honesty* towards Authors, not like his honesty to the rest of the world. B——— who first engag'd me as "Elia," has not paid me up yet, (nor any of us without repeated mortifying applials,) yet how the knave fawned while I was of service to him! Yet I dare say the fellow is punctual in settling his milk-score, &c. Keep to your Bank, and the Bank will keep you. Trust not to the Public, you may hang, starve, drown yourself, for any thing that worthy *Personage* cares.

I bless every star, that Providence, not seeing good to make me independent, has seen it next good to settle me upon the stable foundation of Leadenhall. Sit down good B. B., in the Banking-office; what, is there not from six to eleven *p.m.* six days in the week, and is there not all Sunday? Fie, what a superfluity of man's-time, if you could think so! Enough for relaxation, mirth, converse, poetry, good thoughts, quiet thoughts. O the corroding torturing tormenting thoughts, that disturb the Brain of the unlucky wight, who must draw upon it for daily sustenance. Henceforth I retract all my fond complaints of mercantile employment; look upon them as Lovers' quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome dead timber of a desk, that makes me live. A little grumbling is a wholesome medicine for the spleen, but in my inner heart do I approve and embrace this our close but unharassing way of life. I am quite serious. If you

can send me Fox, I will not keep it six *weeks*, and will return it, with warm thanks to yourself and friend, without blot or dog's ear. You will much oblige me by this kindness. Yours truly, C. LAMB.

CCLXXXV. TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

23 Jan., '23.

Dear Payne,—I have no mornings (my day begins at 5 P.M.) to transact business in, or talents for it, so I employ Mary, who has seen Robertson, who says that the Piece which is to be Operafied was sent to you six weeks since by a Mr. Hunter, whose journey has been delayed, but he supposes you have it by this time. On receiving it back properly done, the rest of your dues will be forthcoming. You have received £30 from Harwood, I hope? Bishop was at the theatre when Mary called, and he has put your other piece into C. Kemble's hands (the piece you talk of offering Elliston) and C. K. sent down word that he had not yet had time to read it. So stand your affairs at present. Glossop has got the Murderer. Will you address him on the subject, or shall I—that is, Mary? She says you must write more *showable* letters about these matters, for, with all our trouble of crossing out this word, and giving a cleaner turn to th' other, and folding down at this part, and squeezing an obnoxious epithet into a corner, she can hardly communicate their contents without offence. What, man, put less gall in your ink, or write me a biting tragedy! C. LAMB.

CCLXXXVI. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Russell House
2 feb./23.

Dear Ayrton,

The Burneys and Paynes dine with us on Wednesday at half past four. It will give us great pleasure (what a canting phrase!—

in short, lad, will Mrs

A. and your harmonious self join them? Get pen and ink forthwith and say so, Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCLXXXVII. TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

T. R., C. G., 8 Feb., 1823.

My Dear Miss Lamb,—I've enclosed for you Mr Payne's piece called Grandpapa, which I regret to say is not thought to be of the nature that will suit this theater; but as there appears to be much merit in it, Mr Kemble strongly recommends that you should send it to the English Opera House, for which it seems to be excellently adapted. As you have already been kind enough to be our medium of communication with Mr Payne, I have imposed this trouble upon you; but if you do not like to act for Mr Payne in business, and have no means of disposing of the piece, I will forward it to Paris or elsewhere as you think he may prefer.

Very truly yours,

HENRY ROBERTSON.

Dr. P——; We have just received the above, and want your instructions. It strikes me as a very merry little piece, that should be played by *very young actors*. It strikes me that Miss Clara Fisher would play the *boy* exactly. She is just such a forward chit. No young *man* would do it without its appearing absurd, but in a girl's hands it would have just all the reality that a short dream of an act requires. Then for the sister, if Miss Stevenson that was, were Miss Stevenson and younger, they two would carry it off. I do not know who they have got in that young line, besides Miss C. F., at Drury, nor how you would like Elliston to have it—has he not had it? I am thick with Arnold, but I have always heard that the very slender profits of the English Opera House do not admit of his giving above a trifle, or next to none, for a piece of this kind. Write me what I should do,

what you would ask, &c. The music (printed) is returned with the piece, and the French original. Tell Mr Grattan I thank him for his book, which as far as I have read it is a very *companionable one*. I have but just received it. It came the same hour with your packet from Covent Garden, *i.e.* yester-night, late, to my summer residence, where, tell Kenney, the cow is quiet. Love to all at Versailles. Write quickly.

C. L.

I have no acquaintance with Kemble at all, having only met him once or twice, but any information, &c., I can get from R., who is a good fellow, you may command. I am sorry the rogues are so dilitory, but I distinctly believe they mean to fulfil their engagement. I am sorry you are not here to see to these things. I am a poor man of business, but command me to the short extent of my tether. My sister's kind remembrance ever. C. L.

CCLXXXVIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

February 17th, 1823.

My dear Sir, — I have read quite through the ponderous folio of G. F. I think Sewell has been judicious in omitting certain parts, as for instance where G. F. *has* revealed to him the natures of all the creatures in their names, as Adam had. He luckily turns aside from that compendious study of natural history, which might have superceded Buffon, to his proper spiritual pursuits, only just hinting what a philosopher he might have been. The ominous passage is near the beginning of the Book. It is clear he means a physical knowledge, without trope or figure. Also, pretences to miraculous healing and the like, are more frequent than I should have suspected from the epitome in Sewell. He is nevertheless a great spiritual man, and I feel very much obliged by your procuring me the Loan of it.

How I like the Quaker phrases—though I think they were hardly completed till Woolman. A pretty little manual of Quaker language (with an endeavour to explain them) might be gathered out of his Book. Could not you do it? I have read through G. F. without finding any explanation of the term *first volume* in the title-page. It takes in all, both his life and his death. Are there more Last words of him? Pray, how may I venture to return it to Mr Sewell at Ipswich? I fear to send such a Treasure by a Stage Coach. Not that I am afraid of the Coachman or the Guard *reading it*. But it might be lost. Can you put me in a way of sending it in safety? The kind-hearted owner trusted it to me for six months. I think I was about as many days in getting through it, and I do not think that I skipped a word of it. I have quoted G. F. in my "Quakers' Meeting," as having said he was "lifted up in spirit," (which I felt at the time to be not a Quaker phrase,) "and the Judge and Jury were as dead men under his feet." I find no such words in his Journal, and I did not get them from Sewell, and the latter sentence I am sure I did not mean to invent. I must have put some other Quaker's words into his mouth. Is it a fatality in me, that every thing I touch turns into a Lie? I once quoted two lines from a translation of Dante, which Hazlitt very greatly admired, and quoted in a Book as proof of the stupendous power of that poet, but no such lines are to be found in the translation, which has been searched for the purpose. I must have dreamed them, for I am quite certain I did not forge them knowingly. What a misfortune to have a Lying memory! Yes, I have seen Miss Coleridge, and wish I had just such a daughter. God love her—To think she should have had to toil thro' five octavos of that cussed (I forget I write to a Quaker) Abbeypony History, and then to abridge them to three, and all for £113. At her years, to be doing

stupid Jesuits' Latin into English, when she should be reading or writing Romances! Heaven send her Uncle do not breed her up a Quarterly Reviewer! which reminds me that he has spoken very respectfully of you in the last number, which is the next thing to having a Review all to one's self. Your description of Mr Mitford's place makes me long for a pippin and some caraways, and a cup of sack in his orchard, when the sweets of the night come in.

Farewell, C. LAMB.

CCLXXXIX. TO WALTER WILSON

Feb. 24, 1823.

Dear W.,—I write that you may not think me neglectful, not that I have any thing to say. In answer to your questions, it was at your house I saw an edition of "Roxana," the preface to which stated that the author had left out that part of it which related to Roxana's daughter persisting in imagining herself to be so, in spite of the mother's denial, from certain hints she had picked up, and throwing herself continually in her mother's way, (as Savage is said to have done in his, prying in at windows to get a glimpse of her), and that it was by advice of Southern, who objected to the circumstances as being untrue, when the rest of the story was founded on fact; which shows S. to have been a stupid-ish fellow. The incidents so resemble Savage's story, that I taxed Godwin with taking Falkner from his life by Dr Johnson. You should have the edition, (if you have not parted with it,) for I saw it never but at your place at the Mews' Gate, nor did I then read it to compare it with my own; only I know the daughter's curiosity is the best part of *my* "Roxana." The prologue you speak of was mine, and so named, but not worth much. You ask me for two or three pages of verse. I have not written so much since you knew me. I am altogether prosaic. May be I may touch

off a sonnet in time. I do not prefer "Colonel Jack" to either "Robinson Crusoe" or "Roxana." I only spoke of the beginning of it, his childish history. The rest is poor. I do not know anywhere any good character of De Foe besides what you mention. I do not know that Swift mentions him; Pope does. I forget if D'Israeli has. Dunlop I think has nothing of him. He is quite new ground, and scarce known beyond "Crusoe." I do not know who wrote "Quarl." I never thought of "Quarl" as having an author. It is a poor imitation; the monkey is the best in it, and his pretty dishes made of shells. Do you know the paper in the *Englishman* by Sir Richard Steele, giving an account of Selkirk? It is admirable, and has all the germs of "Crusoe." You must quote it entire. Captain G. Carleton wrote his own Memoirs; they are about Lord Peterborough's campaign in Spain, and a good book. "Puzzelli" puzzles me, and I am in a cloud about "Donald M'Leod." I never heard of them; so you see, my dear Wilson, what poor assistances I can give in the way of information. I wish your book out, for I shall like to see any thing about De Foe or from you.

Your old friend, C. LAMB.

From my and your old compound.

CCXC. TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

1823.

Dear Payne,—Your little books are most acceptable. 'Tis a delicate edition. They are gone to the binder's. When they come home I shall have two—the "Camp" and "Patrick's Day"—to read for the first time. I may say three, for I never read the "School for Scandal." "*Seen* it I have, and in its happier days." With the books Harwood left a truncheon, or mathematical instrument, of which we have not yet ascertained the use. It is like a telescope, but unglazed. Or a ruler, but not smooth enough.

It opens, like a fan, and discovers a frame such as they weave lace upon at Lyons, and Chamberry. Possible it is from those parts. I do not value the present the less, for not being quite able to detect its purport. When I can find any one coming your way I have a volume for you, my Elias collected. Tell Poole, his Cockney in the London Magazine tickled me exceedingly. Harwood is to be with us this evening with Fanny, who comes to introduce a literary lady, who wants to see me,—and whose portentous name is *Plura*, in English "many things." Now of all God's creatures, I detest letters-affecting, authors-hunting ladies. But Fanny "will have it so." So Miss Many Things and I are to have a conference, of which you shall have the result. I dare say she does not play at whist. Treasurer Robertson, whose coffers are absolutely swelling with pantomimic receipts, called on me yesterday to say, he is going to write to you, but if I were also, I might as well say that your last bill is at the Banker's, and will be honored on the instant receipt of the third Piece, which you have stipulated for. If you have any such in readiness, strike while the iron is hot, before the Clown cools. Tell Mrs Kenney, that the Miss F. H. (or H. F.) Kelley, who has begun so splendidly in Juliet, is the identical little Fanny Kelly, who used to play on their green before their great Lying-Inn Lodgings at Bayswater. Her career has stopt short by the injudicious bringing her out in a vile new Tragedy, and for a third character in a stupid old one,—the Earl of Essex. This is Macready's doing, who taught her. Her recitation, &c., (*not her voice or person*) is masculine. It is so clever, it seemed a male *Debut*. But cleverness is the bane of Female Tragedy especially. Passions uttered logically, &c. It is bad enough in men-actors. Could you do nothing for little Clara Fisher? Are there no French Pieces with a Child in them? By Pieces I mean here dramas, to prevent male-constructions.

Did not the Blue Girl remind you of some of Congreve's women? Angelica or Millamant? To me she was a vision of Genteel Comedy realized. Those kind of people never come to see one. *N'import* — havn't I Miss Many Things coming? Will you ask Horace Smith to . . . . (The remainder of this letter has been lost.)

CCXCI. TO BERNARD BARTON

Tuesday, March 11th, 1823.

Dear Sir,—The approbation of my little book by your sister is very pleasing to me. The Quaker incident did not happen to me, but to Carlisle the surgeon, from whose mouth I have twice heard it, at an interval of ten or twelve years, with little or no variation, and have given it as exactly as I could remember it. The gloss which your sister, or you, have put upon it, does not strike me as correct. Carlisle drew no inference from it against the honesty of the Quakers, but only in favour of their surprising coolness; that they should be capable of committing a good joke, with an utter insensibility to its being any jest at all. I have reason to believe in the truth of it, because, as I have said, I heard him repeat it without variation at such an interval. The story loses sadly in print, for Carlisle is the best story-teller I ever heard. The idea of the discovery of roasting pigs I also borrowed from my friend Manning, and am willing to confess both my plagiarisms. Should fate ever so order it that you shall be in town with your sister, mine bids me say, that she shall have great pleasure in being introduced to her. I think I must give up the cause of the Bank—from nine to nine is galley slavery, but I hope it is but temporary. Your endeavour at explaining Fox's insight into the natures of animals must fail, as I shall transcribe the passage. It appears to me that he stopt short in time, and was on the brink of falling with

his friend Naylor, my favourite. The book shall be forthcoming whenever your friend can make convenient to call for it. They have dragged me again into the Magazine, but I feel the spirit of the thing in my own mind quite gone. "Some brains" (I think Ben Jonson says it) "will endure but one skimming." We are about to have an inundation of poetry from the Lakes; Wordsworth and Southey are coming up strong from the North. The she Coleridges have taken flight, to my regret. With Sara's own-made acquisitions, her unaffectedness and no-pretensions are beautiful. You might pass an age with her without suspecting that she knew any thing but her mother's tongue. I don't mean any reflection on Mrs Coleridge here. I had better have said her vernacular idiom. Poor C., I wish he had a home to receive his daughter in. But he is but as a stranger or a visitor in this world.

How did you like Hartley's sonnets? The first, at least, is vastly fine. Lloyd has been in town a day or two on business, and is perfectly well. I am ashamed of the shabby letters I send, but I am by nature any thing but neat. Therein my mother bore me no Quaker. I never could seal a letter without dropping the wax on one side, besides scalding my fingers. I never had a seal too of my own. Writing to a great man lately, who is moreover very Heraldic, I borrowed a seal of a friend, who by the female side quarters the Protectorial Arms of Cromwell. How they must have puzzled my correspondent! My letters are generally charged as double at the Post Office from their inveterate clumsiness of foldure; so you must not take it disrespectful to yourself if I send you such ungainly scraps. I think I lose £100 a year at the India House, owing solely to my want of neatness in making up accounts. How I puzzle 'em out last is the wonder. I have to do with millions!!

It is time to have done my incoherences.

Believe me, Yours truly, C. Lamb.

CCXCII. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Cards & cold mutton
in Russell St on Friday
at 8 & 9

Gin and Jokes from
½ past that time to 12

Pass this on to Mr. Payne;
and apprize Martin thereof

CCXCIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

April 5th, 1823.

Dear Sir,—You must think me ill-mannered not to have replied to your first letter sooner, but I have an ugly habit of aversion from letter writing, which makes me an unworthy correspondent. I have had no spring, or cordial call to the occupation of late. I have been not well lately, which must be my lame excuse. Your poem, which I consider very affecting, found me engaged about a humorous Paper for the *London*, which I had called "A Letter to an *Old Gentleman* whose Education had been neglected"—and when it was done, Taylor and Hessey would not print it, and it discouraged me from doing any thing else, so I took up Scott, where I had scribbled some petulant remarks, and for a make-shift father'd them on Ritson. It is obvious I could not make your Poem a part of them, and as I did not know whether I should ever be able to do to my mind what you suggested, I thought it not fair to keep back the verses for the chance. Mr Mitford's sonnet I like very well, but as I also have my reasons against interfering at all with the Editorial arrangement of the *London*, I transmitted it (not in my own handwriting) to them, who I doubt not will be glad to insert it. What eventual benefit it can be to you (otherwise than that a kind man's wish is a benefit) I cannot conjecture. Your Society are eminently men of Business, and will probably regard you as an idle fellow, possibly disown you, that is to say, if you had put your own name to a sonnet of that sort, but they cannot excommunicate Mr Mitford, therefore I thoroughly approve of printing the said verses. When I see any Quaker names to the Concert of Ancient Music, or as Directors of the British Institution, or bequeathing medals to Oxford for the best classical themes, &c., then I shall begin to hope they will emancipate you. But what as a Society can

they do for you? You would not accept a commission in the Army, nor they be likely to procure it. Posts in Church or State have they none in their giving—and then, if they disown you—think—you must live "a man forbid."

I wish'd for you yesterday. I dined in Parnassus, with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Rogers, and Tom Moore,—half the Poetry of England constellated and cluster'd in Gloucester Place. It was a delightful Evening! Coleridge was in his finest vein of talk, had all the talk, and let 'em talk as evilly as they do of the envy of Poets, I am sure not one there but was content to be nothing but a listener. The Muses were dumb while Apollo lectured on his and their fine Art. It is a lie that Poets are envious, I have known the best of them, and can speak to it, that they give each other their merits, and are the kindest critics as well as best authors. I am scribbling a muddy epistle with an aching head, for we did not quaff Hippocrene last night. Marry, it was Hippocrass rather. Pray accept this as a letter in the meantime, and do me the favour to mention my respects to Mr Mitford, who is so good as to entertain good thoughts of Elia, but don't show this almost impertinent scrawl. I will write more respectfully next time, for believe me, if not in words, in feelings yours most so—

CCXCIV. TO BRYAN WALLER PROCTER

April 13, 1823.

Dear Lad,—You must think me a brute beast, a rhinoceros, never to have acknowledged the receipt of your precious present. But indeed I am none of those shocking things, but have arrived at that indisposition to letter-writing which would make it a hard exertion to write three lines to a king to spare a friend's life: whether it is that the Magazine paying me so much a page I am loath to throw away composition. How much a sheet do you give your

correspondents? I have hung up Pope, and a gem it is, in my town room; I hope for your approval. Though it accompanies the *Essay on Man*, I think that was not the poem he is here meditating. He would have looked up, somehow affectedly, if he were just conceiving "Awake, my St John." Neither is he in the *Rape of the Lock* mood exactly. I think he has just made out the last lines of the "Epistle to Jervis," between gay and tender,

"And other beauties envy Worsley's eyes."

I'll be d . . . 'd if that isn't the line. He is brooding over it, with a dreamy phantom of Lady Mary floating before him. He is thinking which is the earliest possible day and hour that she will first see it. What a miniature piece of gentility it is! Why did you give it me? I do not like you enough to give you any thing so good.

I have dined with T. Moore and breakfasted with Rogers, since I saw you; have much to say about them when we meet, which I trust will be in a week or two. I have been over-watched and over-poeted since Wordsworth has been in town. I was obliged for health's sake to wish him gone, but now he is gone I feel a great loss. I am going to Dalston to recruit, and have serious thoughts of altering my condition, that is, of taking to sobriety. What do you advise me?

Rogers spake very kindly of you, as every body does, and none with so much reason as your C. L.

CCXCV. TO MISS HUTCHINSON

[April 25, 1823.]

Dear Miss H.,—Mary has such an invincible reluctance to any epistolary exertion, that I am sparing her a mortification by taking the pen from her. The plain truth is, she writes such a pimping, mean, detestable hand, that she is ashamed of the formation

of her letters. There is an essential poverty and abjectness in the frame of them. They look like begging letters. And then she is sure to omit a most substantial word in the second draught, (for she never ventures an epistle without a foul copy first,) which is obliged to be interlined; which spoils the neatest epistle, you know. Her figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, &c., where she has occasion to express numerals, as in the date, (25th April 1823,) are not figures, but figurantes; and the combined posse go staggering up and down shameless, as drunkards in the day-time. It is no better when she rules her paper. Her lines "are not less erring" than her words. A sort of unnatural parallel lines, that are perpetually threatening to meet; which, you know, is quite contrary to Euclid. Her very blots are not bold like this, [*here a large blot is inserted,*] but poor smears, half left in and half scratched out, with another smear left in their place. I like a clear letter; a bold free hand, and a fearless flourish. Then she has always to go through them (a second operation) to dot her *i*'s, and cross her *t*'s. I don't think she can make a corkscrew if she tried, which has such a fine effect at the end or middle of an epistle, and fills up.

There is a corkscrew!—one of the best I ever drew. By the way, what incomparable whisky that was of Monkhouse's! But if I am to write a letter, let me begin, and not stand flourishing, like a fencer at a fair.

April 25th, 1823.

Dear Miss H.,—It gives me great pleasure (the letter now begins) to hear that you got down so smoothly, and that Mrs Monkhouse's spirits are so good and enterprising. It shows whatever her posture may be, that her mind at least is not supine. I hope the excursion will enable the former to keep pace with its outstripping neighbour. Pray present

our kindest wishes to her and all; (that sentence should properly have come into the Postscript, but we airy mercurial spirits, there is no keeping us in.) "Time" (as was said of one of us) "toils after us in vain." I am afraid our co-visit with Coleridge was a dream. I shall not get away before the end (or middle) of June, and then you will be frog-hopping at Boulogne; and besides, I think the Gilmans would scarce trust him with us; I have a malicious knack at cutting of apron-strings. The Saints' days you speak of have long since fled to heaven, with Astræa, and the cold piety of the age lacks fervour to recall them; only Peter left his key—the iron one of the two that "shuts amain"—and that is the reason I am locked up. Meanwhile of afternoons we pick up primroses at Dalston, and Mary corrects me when I call 'em cowslips. God bless you all; and pray remember me euphoniously to Mr Gruvellegan. That Lee Priory must be a dainty bower. Is it built of flints?—and does it stand at Kingsgate?

CCXCVI. TO BERNARD BARTON

May 3rd, 1823.

Dear Sir,—I am vexed to be two letters in your debt, but I have been quite out of the vein lately. A philosophical treatise is wanting, of the causes of the backwardness with which persons after a certain time of life set about writing a letter. I always feel as if I had nothing to say, and the performance generally justifies the presentiment. Taylor and Hessey did foolishly in not admitting the sonnet. Surely it might have followed the B. B. I agree with you in thinking Bowring's paper better than the former. I will inquire about my Letter to the Old Gentleman, but I expect it to *go in*, after those to the Young Gentleman are completed. I do not exactly see why the Goose and little Goslings should emblematize a *Quaker poet that has no children*. But after all—perhaps it is a

Pelican. The Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin around it I cannot decipher. The songster of the night pouring out her effusions amid a silent Meeting of Madge-Owlets, would be at least intelligible. A full pause here comes upon me, as if I had not a word more left. I will shake my brain. Once—twice—nothing comes up—George Fox recommends waiting on these occasions. I wait. Nothing comes. G. Fox—that sets me off again. I have finished the "Journal," and four hundred more pages of the *Doctrinals*, which I picked up for 7*s*. 6*d*. If I get on at this rate, the society will be in danger of having two Quaker poets to patronise. I am at Dalston now, but if, when I go back to Covent Garden, I find thy friend has not call'd for the Journal, thee must put me in the way of sending it; and if it should happen that the Lender of it, having that volume, has not the other, I shall be most happy in his accepting the *Doctrinals*, which I shall read but once certainly. It is not a splendid copy, but perfect, save a leaf of Index.

I cannot but think that the *London* drags heavily. I miss Janus. And O how it misses Hazlitt—Procter too is affronted (as Janus has been) with their abominable curtailment of his things — some meddling Editor or other—or phantom of one—for neither he nor Janus know their busy friend. But they always find the best part cut out; and they have done well to cut also. I am not so fortunate as to be served in this manner, for I would give a clean sum of money in sincerity to leave them handsomely. But the dogs—T. & H. I mean—will not affront me, and what can I do? Must I go on to drivelling? Poor Relations is tolerable—but where shall I get another subject—or who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I assure you it teases me more, than it used to please me. Ch. Lloyd has published a sort of Quaker poem, he tells me, and that he has order'd me a copy, but I have not got it. Have you seen it?

I must leave a little wafer space, which brings me to an apology for a conclusion.

I am afraid of looking back, for I feel all this while I have been writing nothing, but it may show I am alive. Believe me, cordially yours

C. LAMB.

CCXCVII. TO J. B. DIBDIN

May 6, 1823.

Dear Sir,—Your verses were very pleasant, and I shall like to see more of them, I do not mean *addressed to me.*

I do not know whether you live in town or country, but if it suits your convenience I shall be glad to see you some evening—say Thursday—at 20 Great Russell Street, Covent Garden. If you can come, do not trouble yourself to write. We are old-fashioned people who *drink tea* at six, or not much later, and give cold mutton and pickle at nine, the good old hour. I assure you (if it suit you) we shall be glad to see you. Yours, etc. C. LAMB.

My love to Mr Railton. The same to Mr Rankin, to the whole Firm indeed.

E. I. H., Tuesday,
Some day of May, 1823. Elia written on cover.
Not official.

Endorsed:

J. B. Dibdin, Esqr., Messrs Rankings, 113, Cheapside.

CCXCVIII. TO WILLIAM HONE

E. I. H. 19 May, '23.

Dear Sir,—I have been very agreeably entertained with your present, which I found very curious and amusing. What wiseacres our forefathers appear to have been! It should make *us* thankful, who are

grown so rational and polite. I should call to thank you for the book, but go home to Dalston at present. I shall beg your acceptance (when I see you) of my little book. I have Ray's *Collections of English Words not generally Used*, 1691; and in page 60 ("North Country words") occurs "*Rynt ye*"—"by your leave," "stand handsomely." As, "Rynt you, witch," quoth Besse Locket to her mother; Proverb, Cheshire.—Doubtless this is the "Aroint" of Shakspeare.

In the same collection I find several Shaksperisms. "Rooky" wood: a Northern word for "reeky," "misty," &c. "Shandy" a north country word for "wild." Sterne was York,

Yours obliged, C. LAMB.

I am at 14, Kingsland Row, Dalston. Will you take a walk over on Sunday? We dine exactly at 4, and shall be most glad to see you. If I don't hear from you (by note to E. I. Ho.) I will expect you.

Mr Hone,
45, *Ludgate Hill.*

CCXCIX. TO BERNARD BARTON

July 10th, 1823.

Dear Sir,—I shall be happy to read the MS. and to forward it; but T. and H. must judge for themselves of publication. If it prove interesting (as I doubt not) I shall not spare to say so, you may depend upon it. Suppose you direct it to Accountant's Office, India House. I am glad you have met with some sweetening circumstances to your unpalatable draught. I have just returned from Hastings, where are exquisite views and walks, and where I have given up my soul to walking, and I am now suffering sedentary contrasts. I am a long time reconciling to Town after one of these excursions. Home is become strange and will remain so yet a while. Home is the most unforgiving of friends, and always resents Absence; I know its old cordial looks will return, but they are

slow in clearing up. That is one of the features of this *our* galley slavery, that peregrination ended makes things worse. I felt out of water (with all the sea about me) at Hastings, and just as I had learned to domiciliate there, I must come back to find a home which is no home. I abused Hastings, but learned its value. There are spots, inland bays, &c., which realise the notions of Juan Fernandez. The best thing I lit upon by accident was a small country church, (by whom or when built unknown,) standing bare and single in the midst of a grove, with no house or appearance of habitation within a quarter of a mile, only passages diverging from it thro' beautiful woods to so many farm-houses. There it stands like the first idea of a church, before parishioners were thought of, nothing but birds for its congregation, or like a Hermit's oratory (the Hermit dead), or a mausoleum: its effect singularly impressive, like a church found in a desert isle to startle Crusoe with a home image; you must make out a vicar and a congregation from fancy, for surely none come there. Yet it wants not its pulpit, and its font, and all the seemly additaments of *our* worship.

Southey has attacked "Elia" on the score of infidelity, in the *Quarterly* article, "Progress of Infidelity." I had not, nor have, seen the *Monthly*. He might have spared an old friend such a construction of a few careless flights, that meant no harm to religion. If all *his* unguarded expressions on the subject were to be collected——

But I love and respect Southey—and will not retort. I hate his review; and his being a Reviewer.

The hint he has dropped will knock the sale of the book on the head, which was almost at a stop before.

Let it stop. There is corn in Egypt, while there is cash at Leadenhall. You and I are something besides being Writers. Thank God.

Yours truly, C. L.

CHAPTER II.

COLEBROOK ROW—AND THE FLIGHT FROM LEADENHALL

SEPTEMBER 1823—APRIL 1825

CCC. TO BERNARD BARTON

September 2nd, 1823.

Dear B. B.,—What will you say to my not writing? You cannot say I do not write now. Hessey has not used your kind sonnet, nor have I seen it. Pray send me a Copy. Neither have I heard any more of your Friend's MS., which I will reclaim, whenever you

please. When you come London-ward you will find me no longer in Covent Garden. I have a Cottage, in Colebrook Row, Islington. A cottage, for it is detach'd; a white house, with six good rooms, the New River (rather elderly by this time) runs (if a moderate walking pace can be so termed) close to the foot of the house; and behind is a spacious garden, with vines (I assure you) pears, strawberries, parsnips, leeks, carrots, cabbages, to delight the heart of old Alcinous. You enter without passage into a cheerful dining-room, all studded over and rough with old Books, and above is a lightsome Drawing-room, three windows, full of choice prints. I feel like a great Lord, never having had a house before.

The *London* I fear falls off. I linger among its creaking rafters, like the last rat. It will topple down if they don't get some Buttresses. They have pull'd down three: W. Hazlitt, Procter, and their best stay, kind light-hearted Wainwright their Janus. The best is, neither of our fortunes is concern'd in it.

I heard of you from Mr Pulham this morning, and that gave a fillip to my Laziness, which has been intolerable. But I am so taken up with pruning and gardening, quite a new sort of occupation to me. I have gather'd my jargonels, but my windsor Pears are backward. The former were of exquisite raciness. I do now sit under my own vine, and contemplate the growth of vegetable nature. I can now understand in what sense they speak of father Adam. I recognise the paternity, while I watch my tulips. I almost fell with him, for the first day I turned a drunken gardener (as he let in the serpent) into my Eden, and he laid about him, lopping off some choice boughs, &c., which hung over from a neighbour's garden, and in his blind zeal laid waste a shade, which had sheltered their window from the gaze of passers-by. The old gentlewoman (fury made her not handsome) could scarcely be reconciled by all my fine

words. There was no buttering her parsnips. She talk'd of the law. What a lapse to commit on the first day of my happy "garden-state."

I hope you transmitted the Fox-Journal to its Owner with suitable thanks.

Mr Cary, the Dante-man, dines with me to-day. He is a model of a country Parson, lean, (as a Curate ought to be,) modest, sensible, no obtruder of church dogmas, quite a different man from Southey. You would like him. Pray accept this for a Letter, and believe me, with sincere regards, Yours, C. L.

CCCI. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Saturday, 6 Sep. 1823.

Dear Allsop,—I am snugly seated at the cottage. Mary is well, but weak, and comes home on Monday; she will soon be strong enough to see her friends here. In the mean time, will you dine with me at ½ past four to-morrow? Ayrton and Mr Burney are coming.

Colebrook Cottage, left hand side, end of Colebrook Row, on the western brink of the New River, a detach'd whitish house.

No answer is required, but come if you can.

C. Lamb.

I called on you on Sunday. Respects to Mrs A and boy.

CCCII. TO THE SAME

E. I. House, 9 Sep. 1823.

My dear A.,—I am going to ask you to do me the greatest favour which a man can do for another. I want to make my will, and to leave my property in trust for my Sister. N.B. I am not therefore going to die.—Would it be unpleasant for you to be named for one? The other two I shall beg the same favour

of are Talfourd and Procter. If you feel reluctant, tell me, and it sha'n't abate one jot of my friendly feeling toward you.

Yours ever,

C. LAMB.

CCCIII. TO THE SAME

Sep. 10, 1823.

My dear A.,—Your kindness in accepting my request no words of mine can repay. It has made you overflow into some romance which I should have check'd at another time. I hope it may be in the scheme of Providence that my sister may go first (if ever so little a precedence), myself next, and my good Executors survive to remember us with kindness many years. God bless you.

I will set Procter about the will forthwith.

C. LAMB.

CCCIV. TO THE SAME

Tuesday [? 16 Sept.], 1823.

My dear Allsop,—I thank you for thinking of my recreation. But I am best here—I feel I am; I have tried town lately, but came back worse. Here I must wait till my loneliness has its natural cure. Besides that, though I am not very sanguine, yet I live in hopes of better news from Fulham, and cannot be out of the way. 'Tis ten weeks to-morrow.—I saw Mary a week since; she was in excellent bodily health, but otherwise far from well. But a week or so may give a turn. Love to Mrs A. and children, and fair weather accompany you.

C. L.

CCCV. TO BERNARD BARTON

September 17th, 1823.

Dear Sir,—I have again been reading your Stanzas on Bloomfield, which are the most appropriate that

can be imagined, sweet with doric delicacy. I like that,—

> Our more chaste Theocritus—

just hinting at the fault of the Grecian. I love that stanza ending with,

> Words, phrases, fashions, pass away
> But Truth and nature live through all.

But I shall omit in my own copy the one stanza which alludes to Lord B. I suppose. It spoils the sweetness and oneness of the feeling. Cannot we think of Burns, or Thomson, without sullying the thought with a reflection out of place upon Lord Rochester? These verses might have been inscribed upon a tomb; are in fact an epitaph; satire does not look pretty upon a tombstone. Besides, there is a quotation in it, always bad in verse, seldom advisable in prose. I doubt if their having been in a Paper will not prevent T. and H. from insertion, but I shall have a thing to send in a day or two, and shall try them. Omitting that stanza, a *very little* alteration is wanting in the beginning of the next. You see, I use freedom. How happily (I flatter not!) you have brought in his subjects; and (I suppose) his favourite measure, though I am not acquainted with any of his writings but the *Farmer's Boy*. He dined with me once, and his manners took me exceedingly.

I rejoice that you forgive my long silence. I continue to estimate my own-roof comforts highly. How could I remain all my life a lodger! My garden thrives, (I am told,) tho' I have yet reaped nothing but some tiny salad and withered carrots. But a garden's a garden anywhere, and twice a garden in London.

Somehow I cannot relish that word Horkey. Cannot you supply it by circumlocution, and direct the reader by a note to explain that it means the

Horkey. But Horkey choaks me in the Text. It raises crowds of mean associations, Hawking and sp——g, Gaukey, Stalky, Maukin. The sound is every thing in such dulcet modulations 'specially. I like

Gilbert Meldrum's sterner tones,

without knowing who Gilbert Meldrum is. You have slipt in your rhymes as if they grew there, so natural-artificially, or artificial-naturally. There's a vile phrase!

Do you go on with your Quaker Sonnets? Have 'em ready with Southey's Book of the Church. I meditate a letter to S. in the "London," which perhaps will meet the fate of the Sonnet.

Excuse my brevity, for I write painfully at office, liable to a hundred callings off. And I can never sit down to an epistle elsewhere. I read or walk. If you return this letter to the Post Office, I think they will return fourpence, seeing it is but half a one. Believe me, tho',

Entirely yours, C. L.

CCCVI. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

1823.

Dear A.,—Your Cheese is the best I ever tasted; Mary will tell you so hereafter. She is at home, but has disappointed me. She has gone back rather than improved. However, she has sense enough to value the present; for she is greatly fond of Stilton. Yours is the delicatest, rain-bow-hued, melting piece I ever flavoured. Believe me, I took it the more kindly, following so great a kindness.

Depend upon't, yours shall be one of the first houses we shall present outselves at, when we have got our Bill of Health.

Being both yours and Mrs Allsop's truly.

C. L. and M. L.

CCCVII. TO THE SAME

Saturday, 4 October, 1823.

Dear Sir,—Will Mrs A. and you dine with us to-morrow at half past 3? Do not think of troubling yourself to send (if you cannot come), as we shall provide only a goose (which is in the House), and your not coming will make no difference in our arrangements.

Your obliged,

C. LAMB.

CCCVIII. TO THE REV. H. F. CARY

India Office, 14th Oct. 1823.

Dear Sir,—If convenient, will you give us house room on Saturday next? I can sleep anywhere. If another Sunday suit you better, pray let me know. We were talking of Roast *Shoulder* of Mutton with onion sauce; but I scorn to prescribe to the hospitalities of mine host.

With respects to Mrs C., yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCCIX. TO J. B. DIBDIN

October 28, 1823.

My dear Sir,—Your Pig was a *picture* of a pig, and your Picture a *pig* of a picture. The former was delicious but evanescent, like a hearty fit of mirth, or the crackling of thorns under a pot; but the latter is an *idea*, and abideth. I never before saw swine upon satin. And then that pretty strawy canopy about him! he seems to purr (rather than grunt) his satisfaction. Such a gentlemanlike porker too! Morland's are absolutely clowns to it. Who the deuce painted it? I have ordered a little gilt shrine for it, and mean to wear it for a locket; a shirt-pig.

I admire the pretty toes shrouded in a veil of something, not *mud*, but that warm soft consistency which the dust takes in Elysium after a spring shower —it perfectly engloves him.

I cannot enough thank you and your country friend for the delicate double present—the Utile et Decorum.

Three times have I attempted to write this sentence and failed; which shows that I am not cut out for a pedant.

Sir (as I say to Southey)—will you come and see us at our poor cottage of Colebrooke to tea to-morrow evening, as early as six? I have some friends coming at that hour.

The panoply which covered your material pig shall be forthcoming. The pig pictorial, with its trappings, domesticate with me.

Your greatly obliged

ELIA.

J. B. Dibdin, Esq.,
Messrs Rankings,
113, *Cheapside.*

CCCX. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

The Cottage, Saturday Night [Nov.].

Dear Sir,—Mary has got a cold, and the nights are dreadful; but at the first indication of Spring (alias the first dry weather in November, *early*) it is our intention to surprise you early some evening.

Believe me, most truly yours,

C. L.

Mary regrets very much Mrs Allsop's fruitless visit. It made her swear! She was gone to visit Miss Hutchinson, whom she found out.

CCCXI. TO THE SAME

E. I. H., 7th November.

Dear Allsop,—Our dinner-hour on Sundays is four, at which we shall be most happy to see Mrs A. and yourself—I mean next Sunday, but I also mean any Sunday. Pray come. I am up to my very ears in business, but pray come.

Yours most sincerely,

C. L.

CCCXII. TO MRS HAZLITT

[November, 1823.]

Dear Mrs H.,—Sitting down to write a letter is such a painful operation to Mary, that you must accept me as her proxy. You have seen our house. What I now tell you is literally true. Yesterday week George Dyer called upon us, at one o'clock, (*bright noonday*,) on his way to dine with Mrs Barbauld at Newington. He sat with Mary about half an hour, and took leave. The maid saw him go out, from her kitchen window, but suddenly losing sight of him, ran up in a fright to Mary. G. D., instead of keeping the slip that leads to the gate, had deliberately, staff in hand, in broad open day, marched into the New River. He had not his spectacles on, and you know his absence. Who helped him out they can hardly tell, but between 'em they got him out, drenched thro' and thro'. A mob collected by that time, and accompanied him in. "Send for the Doctor," they said: and a one-eyed fellow, dirty and drunk, was fetched from the public house at the end, where it seems he lurks, for the sake of picking up water practice; having formerly had a medal from the Humane Society for some rescue. By his advice the patient was put between blankets; and when I came home at four to dinner, I found G. D. a-bed, and raving, light-headed, with

the brandy and water which the doctor had administered. He sang, laughed, whimpered, screamed, babbled of guardian angels, would get up and go home; but we kept him there by force; and by next morning he departed sober, and seems to have received no injury. All my friends are open-mouth'd about having paling before the river; but I cannot see, that because a lunatic chooses to walk into a river with his eyes open at mid day, I am any the more likely to be drowned in it, coming home at midnight.

I had the honour of dining at the Mansion House on Thursday last by special card from the Lord Mayor, who never saw my face, nor I his; and all from being a writer in a magazine. The dinner costly, served on massy plate; champagne, pines, &c.; 47 present, among whom the Chairman and two other directors of the India Company.

There's for you! and got away pretty sober. Quite saved my credit.

We continue to like our house prodigiously.

Does Mary Hazlitt go on with her novel? or has she begun another? I would not discourage her, though we continue to think it (so far) in its present state not saleable. Our kind remembrances to her and hers, and you and yours.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

I am pleased that H. liked my letter to the Laureat.

Mrs Hazlitt,
Alphington near Exeter.

CCCXIII. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

E. I. H., 21st November 1823.

Dear Southey,—The kindness of your note has melted away the mist which was upon me. I have been fighting against a shadow. That accursed *Q.R.*

had vexed me by a gratuitous speaking of its own knowledge that the *Confessions of a D—d* was a genuine description of the state of the writer. Little things that are not ill-meant may produce much ill. *That* might have injured me, alive and dead. I am in a public office, and my life is insured. I was prepared for anger, and I thought I saw, in a few obnoxious words, a hard case of repetition directed against me. I wish both magazine and review at the bottom of the sea. I shall be ashamed to see you, and my sister (tho' innocent) will be still more so; for the folly was done without her knowledge, and has made her uneasy ever since. My guardian angel was absent at that time.

I will muster up courage to see you, however, any day next week (Wednesday excepted). We shall hope that you will bring Edith with you. That will be a second mortification. She will hate to see us; but come and heap embers. We deserve it; I, for what I've done, and she for being my sister.

Do come early in the day, by sun-light, that you may see my *Milton*.

I am at Colebrook Cottage, Colebrook Row, Islington: a detached whitish house, close to the New River end of Colebrook Terrace, left hand coming from Sadler's Wells.

Will you let me know the day before?

Your penitent, C. LAMB.

P.S.—I do not think your hand-writing at all like ****'s. I do not think many things I did think.

CCCXIV. TO BERNARD BARTON

Nov. 22, 1823.

Dear B. B.,—I am ashamed at not acknowledging your kind little poem, which I must needs like much, but I protest I thought I had done it at the moment. Is it possible a letter has miscarried? Did you get

one in which I sent you an extract from the poems of Lord Stirling? I should wonder if you did, for I sent you none such. There was an incipient Lie strangled in the birth. Some people's conscience is so tender! But, in plain truth, I thank you very much for the verses. I have a very kind letter from the Laureat, with a self-invitation to come and shake hands with me. This is truly handsome and noble. 'Tis worthy of my old idea of Southey. Shall not I, think you, be covered with a red suffusion?

You are too much apprehensive of your complaint. I know many that are always ailing of it, and live on to a good old age. I know a merry fellow (you partly know him) who, when his Medical Adviser told him he had drunk away all *that part*, congratulated himself (now his liver was gone) that he should be the longest liver of the two. The best way in these cases is to keep yourself as ignorant as you can—as ignorant as the world was before Galen—of the entire inner construction of the Animal Man—not to be conscious of a midriff,—to hold kidneys (save of sheep and swine) to be an agreeable fiction—not to know whereabouts the gall grows—to account the circulation of the blood an idle whimsey of Harvey's—to acknowledge no mechanism not visible. For, once fix the seat of your disorder, and your fancies flux into it like bad humours. Those medical gentries choose each his favourite part—one takes the lungs—another the aforesaid liver—and refer to *that* whatsoever in the animal economy is amiss. Above all, use exercise, take a little more spirituous liquors, learn to smoke, continue to keep a good conscience, and avoid tampering with hard terms of art—Viscosity—scirrhosity, and those bugbears, by which simple patients are scared into their graves. Believe the general sense of the mercantile world, which holds that desks are not deadly. It is the mind, good B. B., and not the limbs, that taints by long sitting. Think

of the patience of tailors—think how long the Chancellor sits—think of the Brooding Hen.

I protest I cannot answer thy Sister's kind inquiry, but I judge, I shall put forth no second volume. More praise than buy, and T. and H. are not particularly disposed for Martyrs. Thou wilt see a funny passage, and yet a true History, of George Dyer's Aquatic Incursion in the next London. Beware his fate, when thou comest to see me at my Colebrook Cottage. I have filled my little space with my little thoughts. I wish thee ease on thy Sofa, but not too much indulgence on it. From my poor desk, thy fellow-sufferer, this bright November, C. L.

CCCXV. TO WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH

India House, 9th Dec. 1823.

Dear Sir,—I should have thanked you for your books and compliments sooner, but have been waiting for a revise to be sent, which does not come, though I returned the proof on the receipt of your letter. I have read Warner with great pleasure. What an elaborate piece of alliteration and antithesis! why it must have been a labour far above the most difficult versification. There is a fine simile or picture of Semiramis arming to repel a siege. I do not mean to keep the book, for I suspect you are forming a curious collection, and I do not pretend to any thing of the kind. I have not a black-letter book among mine, old Chaucer excepted, and am not bibliomanist enough to like black-letter. It is painful to read; therefore I must insist on returning it at opportunity, not from contumacy and reluctance to be obliged, but because it must suit you better than me. The loss of a present *from* should never exceed the gain of a present *to*. I hold this maxim infallible in the accepting line. I read your magazines with satisfaction. I thoroughly agree with you as to "The German Faust," as far as

I can do justice to it from an English translation. 'Tis a disagreeable canting tale of seduction, which has nothing to do with the spirit of Faustus—Curiosity. Was the dark secret to be explored to end in the seducing of a weak girl, which might have been accomplished by earthly agency? When Marlowe gives *his* Faustus a mistress, he flies him at Helen, flower of Greece, to be sure, and not at Miss Betsy, or Miss Sally Thoughtless.

> "Cut is the branch that bore the goodly fruit,
> And wither'd is Apollo's laurel tree:
> Faustus is dead."

What a noble natural transition from metaphor to plain speaking! as if the figurative had flagged in description of such a loss, and was reduced to tell the fact simply.

I must now thank you for your very kind invitation. It is not out of prospect that I may see Manchester some day, and then I will avail myself of your kindness. But holidays are scarce things with me, and the laws of attendance are getting stronger and stronger at Leadenhall. But I shall bear it in mind. Meantime something may (more probably) bring you to town, where I shall be happy to see you. I am always to be found (alas!) at my desk in the fore part of the day.

I wonder why they do not send the revise. I leave late at office, and my abode lies out of the way, or I should have seen about it. If you are impatient, perhaps a line to the printer, directing him to send it me, at Accountant's Office, may answer. You will see by the scrawl that I only snatch a few minutes from intermitting business.

Your obliged servant,

C. Lamb.

(If I had time I would go over this letter again, and dot all my *i*'s.)

CCCXVI. TO THE SAME

India House, Dec. 29th, 1823.

My dear Sir,—You talk of months at a time, and I know not what inducements to visit Manchester, Heaven knows how gratifying! but I have had my little month of 1823 already. It is all over; and without incurring a disagreeable favour I cannot so much as get a single holiday till the season returns with the next year. Even our half-hour's absences from office are set down in a book! Next year, if I can spare a day or two of it, I will come to Manchester; but I have reasons at home against longer absences.

I am so ill just at present, (an illness of my own procuring last night; who is perfect?) that nothing but your very great kindness could make me write. I will bear in mind the letter to W. W., and you shall have it quite in time, before the 12th.

My aching and confused head warns me to leave off. With a muddled sense of gratefulness, which I shall apprehend more clearly to-morrow, I remain, your friend unseen, C. L.

Will your occasions or inclination bring you to London? It will give me great pleasure to show you every thing that Islington can boast, if you know the meaning of that very Cockney sound. We have the New River! I am ashamed of this scrawl; but I beg you to accept it for the present. I am full of qualms.

"A fool at fifty is a fool indeed."

CCCXVII. TO WILLIAM HONE

[? December 1823.]

Dear Sir,—Miss Hazlitt is anxious about her MS. novel. Would you be so kind as to transmit it some way or other to Mr Hardy, 30, Queen's Row, or

Queen's Square, Pimlico, if he has not already got it? I am afraid I have not duly acknowledged the present of your excellent pamphlet, for which much thanks and approbation, tho' late.

I remain, yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Mr Hone,
45, *Ludgate Hill.*

CCCXVIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

January 9, 1824.

Dear B. B.,—Do you know what it is to succumb under an insurmountable day-mare,—a whoreson lethargy, Falstaff calls it,—an indisposition to do any thing, or to be any thing,—a total deadness and distaste—a suspension of vitality,—an indifference to locality,—a numb, soporifical, good-for-nothingness—an ossification all over,—an oyster-like insensibility to the passing events,—a mind-stupor,—a brawny defiance to the needles of a thrusting-in conscience—did you ever have a very bad cold with a total irresolution to submit to water-gruel processes? this has been for many weeks my lot and my excuse—my fingers drag heavily over this paper, and to my thinking it is three-and-twenty furlongs from here to the end of this demi-sheet—I have not a thing to say—no thing is of a more importance than another—I am flatter than a denial or a pancake—emptier than Judge Park's wig when the head is in it—duller than a country stage when the actors are off it—a cipher—an o—I acknowledge life at all only by an occasional convulsional cough, and a permanent phlegmatic pain in the chest—I am weary of the world—Life is weary of me. My day is gone into Twilight, and I don't think it worth the expense of candles—my wick hath a thief in it, but I can't muster courage to snuff it—I inhale suffocation—I can't distinguish veal from

mutton—nothing interests me—'tis 12 o'clock, and Thurtell is just now coming out upon the New Drop—Jack Ketch alertly tucking up his greasy sleeves to do the last office of mortality, yet cannot I elicit a groan or a moral reflection—if you told me the world will be at an end to-morrow, I should just say, "will it?"—I have not volition enough left to dot my *i*'s—much less to comb my eyebrows—my eyes are set in my head—my brains are gone out to see a poor relation in Moorfields, and they did not say when they'd come back again—my skull is a Grub Street Attic, to let—not so much as a joint-stool or a crack'd jordan left in it—my hand writes, not I, from habit, as chickens run about a little when their heads are off—O for a vigorous fit of gout, cholic, toothache,—an earwig in my auditory, a fly in my visual organs—pain is life—the sharper, the more evidence of life—but this apathy, this death—did you ever have an obstinate cold, a six or seven weeks' unintermitting chill and suspension of hope, fear, conscience, and every thing—yet do I try all I can to cure it, I try wine, and spirits, and smoking, and snuff in unsparing quantities, but they all only seem to make me worse, instead of better—I sleep in a damp room, but it does me no good; I come home late o' nights, but do not find any visible amendment.

Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

It is just 15 minutes after 12. Thurtell is by this time a good way on his journey, baiting at Scorpion perhaps, Ketch is bargaining for his cast coat and waistcoat, the Jew demurs at first at three half-crowns, but on consideration that he may get somewhat by showing 'em in the Town, finally closes. C. L.

CCCXIX. TO THE SAME

Jan. 23rd, 1824.

My dear sir,—That peevish letter of mine, which was meant to convey an apology for my incapacity

to write, seems to have been taken by you in too serious a light. It was only my way of telling you I had a severe cold. The fact is I have been insuperably dull and lethargic for many weeks, and cannot rise to the vigour of a Letter, much less an Essay. The *London* must do without me for a time, a time, and half a time, for I have lost all interest about it, and whether I shall recover it again I know not. I will bridle my pen another time, and not teaze and puzzle you with my aridities. I shall begin to feel a little more alive with the spring. Winter is to me (mild or harsh) always a great trial of the spirits. I am ashamed not to have noticed your tribute to Woolman, whom we love so much. It is done in your good manner. Your friend Taylor called upon me some time since, and seems a very amiable man. His last story is painfully fine. His Book I "like." It is only too stuffed with scripture, too Parsonish. The best thing in it is the Boy's own story. When I say it is too full of Scripture, I mean it is too full of direct quotations; no book can have too much of silent Scripture in it. But the natural power of a story is diminished when the uppermost purpose in the writer seems to be to recommend something else, viz., Religion. You know what Horace says of the *Deus Intersit*. I am not able to explain myself, you must do it for me.

My sister's part in the Leicester School (about two-thirds) was purely her own; as it was (to the same quantity) in the Shakspeare Tales which bear my name. I wrote only the Witch Aunt, the First Going to Church, and the final Story about a little Indian girl in a ship.

Your account of my Black Balling amused me. *I think, as Quakers, they did right.* There are some things hard to be understood.

The more I think, the more I am vexed at having puzzled you with that Letter, but I have been so out

of Letter-writing of late years, that it is a sore effort to sit down to it, and I felt in your debt, and sat down waywardly to pay you in bad money. Never mind my dulness, I am used to long intervals of it. The heavens seem brass to me—then again comes the refreshing shower—"I have been merry once or twice ere now."

You said something about Mr Mitford in a late letter, which I believe I did not advert to. I shall be happy to show him my Milton (it is all the show things I have) at any time he will take the trouble of a jaunt to Islington. I do also hope to see Mr Taylor there some day. Pray say so to both.

Coleridge's book is in good part printed, but sticks a little for *more copy*. It bears an unsaleable Title, Extracts from Bishop Leighton, but I am confident there will be plenty of good notes in it, more of Bishop Coleridge than Leighton, I hope, for what is Leighton?

Do you trouble yourself about Libel cases? The Decision against Hunt for the "Vision of Judgment" made me sick. What is to become of the good old talk about our good old King—his personal virtues saving us from a revolution, &c. &c. Why, none that think can utter it now. It must stink. And the Vision is really, as to Him-ward, such a tolerant, good-humour'd thing. What a wretched thing a Lord Chief Justice is, always was, and will be!

Keep your good spirits up, dear B. B.; mine will return—They are at present in abeyance. But I am rather lethargic than miserable. I don't know but a good horsewhip would be more beneficial to me than Physic. My head, without aching, will teach yours to ache. It is well I am getting to the conclusion. I will send a better letter when I am a better man. Let me thank you for your kind concern for me, (which I trust will have reason soon to be dissipated,) and assure you that it gives me pleasure to hear from you.

Yours truly, C. L.

CCCXX. TO CHARLES OLLIER

[January 27, 1824.]

Dear Ollier,—Many thanks from both of us for *Inesilla*. I wished myself younger, that I might have more enjoyed the terror of that desolate city, and the damned palace. I think it is as fine as any thing in its way, and wish you joy of success, &c.

With better weather, I shall hope to see you at Islington.

Meantime, believe me,
Yours truly,
C. Lamb.

Scribbled midst official flurry.

CCCXXI. TO BERNARD BARTON

February 25th, 1824.

My dear sir,—Your title of Poetic Vigils arrides me much more than a volume of verse, which is no meaning. The motto says nothing, but I cannot suggest a better. I do not like mottoes but where they are singularly felicitous; there is foppery in them. They are un-plain, un-Quakerish. They are good only where they flow from the Title, and are a kind of justification of it. There is nothing about watchings or lucubrations in the one you suggest, no commentary on Vigils. By the way, a wag would recommend you to the line of Pope,

Sleepless himself—to give his readers sleep.

I by no means wish it. But it may explain what I mean, that a neat motto is child of the Title. I think Poetic Vigils as short and sweet as can be desired, only have an eye on the Proof, that the Printer do not substitute Virgils, which would ill accord with your modesty or meaning. Your suggested motto is antique enough in spelling, and modern enough

in phrases; a good modern antique: but the matter of it is germain to the purpose, only supposing the title proposed a vindication of yourself from the presumption of authorship. The first title was liable to this objection, that if you were disposed to enlarge it, and the bookseller insisted on its appearance in Two Tomes, how oddly it would sound,

A VOLUME OF VERSE

IN TWO VOLUMES,

SECOND EDITION, ETC.

You see thro' my wicked intention of curtailing this Epistolet by the above device of large margin. But in truth the idea of letterizing has been oppressive to me of late above your candour to give me credit for. There is Southey, whom I ought to have thank'd a fortnight ago for a present of the Church Book. I have never had courage to buckle myself in earnest even to acknowledge it by six words. And yet I am accounted by some people a good man. How cheap that character is acquired! Pay your debts, don't borrow money, nor twist your kitten's neck off, nor disturb a congregation, &c., your business is done. I know things (thoughts or things—thoughts *are* things) of myself, which would make every friend I have fly me as a plague patient. I once * * *, and set a dog upon a crab's leg that was shoved out under a mass of sea-weeds, a pretty little feeler. Oh! pah! how sick I am of that and a lie, a mean one, I once told—

I stink in the midst of respect. I am much hypt, the fact is, my head is heavy, but there is hope, or if not, I am better than a poor shell-fish—not morally, when I set the whelp upon it, but have more blood and spirits; things may turn up, and I may creep again into a decent opinion of myself. Vanity will

return with sunshine. Till when, pardon my neglects, and impute it to the wintry solstice.

C. LAMB.

CCCXXII. TO THE SAME

March 24th, 1824.

Dear B. B.,—I hasten to say that if my opinion can strengthen you in your choice, it is decisive for your acceptance of what has been so handsomely offered. I can see nothing injurious to your most honourable sense. Think that you are called to a poetical Ministry—nothing worse—the Minister is worthy of the hire.—

The only objection I feel is founded on a fear that the acceptance may be a temptation to you to let fall the bone (hard as it is) which is in your mouth and must afford tolerable pickings, for the shadow of independence. You cannot propose to become independent on what the low state of interest could afford you from such a principal as you mention; and the most graceful excuse for the acceptance would be, that it left you free to your voluntary functions. That is the less *light* part of the scruple. It has no darker shade. I put in *darker* because of the ambiguity of the word "light," which Donne, in his admirable poem on the Metempsychosis, has so ingeniously illustrated in his invocation—

"Make my $\overset{1}{\textit{dark}}$ $\overset{2}{\textit{heavy}}$ poem, $\overset{1}{\textit{light}}$ and $\overset{2}{\textit{light}}$,"

where the two senses of *light* are opposed to different opposites. A trifling criticism. I can see no reason for any scruple than but what arises from your own interest; which is in your own power of course to solve. If you still have doubts, read over Sanderson's *Cases of Conscience*, and Jeremy Taylor's *Ductor Dubitantium*, the first a moderate octavo, the latter

a folio of 900 close pages, and when you have thoroughly digested the admirable reasons *pro* and *con* which they give for every possible Case, you will be——just as wise as when you began. Every man is his own best casuist; and after all, as Ephraim Smooth, in the pleasant comedy of *Wild Oats*, has it, "there is no harm in a Guinea." *A fortiori* there is less in 2000.

I therefore most sincerely congratulate with you, excepting so far as excepted above. If you have fair prospects of adding to the Principal, cut the Bank; but in either case do not refuse an honest Service. Your heart tells you it is not offered to bribe you *from* any duty, but *to* a duty which you feel to be your vocation. Farewell heartily.

C. L.

CCCXXIII. TO MRS ALLSOP

India House, 13 April [1824].

Dear Mrs A.,—Mary begs me to say how much she regrets we cannot join you to Reigate: our reasons are—1st, I have but one holyday, namely, Good Friday, and it is not pleasant to solicit for another, but that might have been got over. 2ndly, Manning is with us, soon to go away, and we should not be easy in leaving him. 3rdly, our school-girl Emma comes to us for a few days on Thursday. 4thly and lastly, Wordsworth is returning home in about a week, and out of respect to them we should not like to absent ourselves just now. In summer I shall have a month, and, if it shall suit, should like to go for a few days of it with you both any where. In the mean time, with many acknowledgements, &c., &c.

I remain,
Yours (both) truly,
C. Lamb.

Remember Sunday's.

CCCXXIV. TO BERNARD BARTON

[No date.]

I am sure I cannot fill a letter, though I should disfurnish my skull to fill it. But you expect something, and shall have a Notelet. Is Sunday, not divinely speaking, but humanly and holidaysically, a blessing? Without its institution, would our rugged taskmasters have given us a leisure day, so often, think you, as once in a month? or, if it had not been instituted, might they not have given us every 6th day? Solve me this problem. If we are to go 3 times a-day to Church, why has Sunday slipt into the notion of a *Holli*day? A Holyday I grant it. The Puritans, I have read in Southey's Book, knew the distinction. They made people observe Sunday rigorously, would not let a nursery-maid walk out in the fields with children for recreation on that day. But *then*—they gave the people a holiday from all sorts of work every second Tuesday. This was giving to the Two Cæsars that which was *his* respective. Wise, beautiful, thoughtful, generous legislators! Would Wilberforce give us our Tuesdays? No, (d—n him.) He would turn the six days into sevenths,

> And those three smiling seasons of the year
> Into a Russian winter.—Old Play.

I am sitting opposite a person who is making strange distortions with the gout, which is not unpleasant—to me at least. What is the reason we do not sympathize with pain, short of some terrible surgical operation? Hazlitt, who boldly says all he feels, avows that not only he does not pity sick people, but he hates them. I obscurely recognise his meaning. Pain is probably too selfish a consideration, too simply a consideration of self-attention. We pity poverty, loss of friends, &c.—more

complex things, in which the sufferer's feelings are associated with others. This is a rough thought suggested by the presence of gout; I want head to extricate it and plane it. What is all this to your Letter? I felt it to be a good one, but my turn, when I write at all, is perversely to travel out of the record, so that my letters are any thing but answers. So you still want a motto? You must not take my ironical one, because your book, I take it, is too serious for it. Bickerstaff might have used it for *his* lucubrations. What do you think of (for a Title)

Religio Tremuli
or Tremebundi

There is Religio-Medici and Laici. But perhaps the volume is not quite Quakerish enough or exclusively for it. But your own Vigils is perhaps the Best. While I have space, let me congratulate with you the return of Spring, what a Summery Spring too! all those qualms about the dog and cray-fish melt before it. I am going to be happy and *vain* again.

A hasty farewell.

C. LAMB.

CCCXXV. TO THE SAME

[Postmark May 15, 1824.]

Dear B. B.,—I am oppressed with business all day and Company all night. But I will snatch a quarter of an hour. Your recent acquisitions of the Picture and the Letter are greatly to be congratulated.—I too have a picture of my father and the copy of his first Love verses, but they have been mine long. Blake is a real name, I assure you, and a most extraordinary man, if he be still living. He is the Robert Blake, whose wild designs accompany a splendid folio edition of the "Night Thoughts," which you may have seen, in one of which he pictures the parting

of soul and body by a solid mass of human form floating off God knows how from a lumpish mass (fac Simile to itself) left behind on the dying bed. He paints in water colours, marvellous strange pictures, visions of his brain which he asserts that he has seen. They have great merit. He has *seen* the old Welsh bards on Snowdon—he has seen the Beautifullest, the Strongest, and the Ugliest Man, left alone from the Massacre of the Britons by the Romans, and has painted them from memory (I have seen his paintings) and asserts them to be as good as the figures of Raphael and Angelo, but not better, as they had precisely the same retro-visions and prophetic visions with themself [himself]. The painters in Oil (which he will have it that neither of them practised) he affirms to have been the ruin of art, and affirms that all the while he was engaged in his Water-paintings, Titian was disturbing him, Titian the Ill Genius of Oil Painting. His Pictures, one in particular the Canterbury Pilgrims (far above Stothard's) have great merit, but hard, dry, yet with grace. He has written a Catalogue of them, with a most spirited criticism on Chaucer, but mystical and full of Vision. His poems have been sold hitherto only in manuscript. I never read them, but a friend at my desire procured the Sweep Song. There is one to a Tiger, which I have heard recited, beginning

> "Tiger Tiger, burning bright,
> Thro' the desarts of the night"

which is glorious. But alas! I have not the Book, for the man is flown, whither I know not, to Hades, or a Mad House.—But I must look on him as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age. Montgomery's Book I have not much hope from. The Society, with the affected name, have been laboring at it for these twenty years, and made few converts. I think it was injudicious to mix stories

avowedly colour'd by fiction with the sad true statements from the parliamentary records, &c. but I wish the little Negroes all the good that can come from it. I *ba*tter'd my brains (not butter'd them—but it is a bad *a*) for a few verses for them, but I could make nothing of it. You have been luckier. But Blake's are the flower of the set you will, I am sure agree, tho' some of Montgomery's at the end are pretty—but the Dream awkwardly paraphras'd from B.

With the exception of an Epilogue for a Private Theatrical, I have written nothing now for near six months. It is in vain to spur me on. I must wait. I cannot write without a genial impulse and I have none. 'Tis barren all and dearth. No matter, life is something without scribbling. I have got rid of my bad spirits, and hold up pretty well this rain-damn'd May.

So we have lost another Poet. I never much relished his Lordship's mind, and shall be sorry if the Greeks have cause to miss him. He was to me offensive, and I never can make out his great *power*, which his admirers talk of. Why, a line of Wordsworth's is a lever to lift the immortal spirit! Byrons can only move the Spleen. He was at best a Satyrist—in any other way he was mean enough. I daresay I do him injustice; but I cannot love him, nor squeeze a tear to his memory. He did not like the world, and he has left it, as Alderman Curtis advised the Radicals, "if they dont like their Country, damn 'em, let 'em leave it"—they possessing no rood of Ground in England, and he ten thousand acres. Byron was better than many Curtises.

Farewell. Accept this Apology for a Letter from one who owes you so much in that kind.

Yours ever truly,

C. L.

B. Barton, Esq.,
Woodbridge, Suffolk.

CCCXXVI. TO THE SAME

July 7th, 1824.

Dear B. B.,—I have been suffering under a severe inflammation of the eyes, notwithstanding which I resolutely went through your very pretty volume at once, which I dare pronounce in no ways inferior to former lucubrations. "*Abroad*" and "*lord*" are vile rhymes notwithstanding, and if you count you will wonder how many times you have repeated the word *unearthly*; thrice in one poem. It is become a slang word with the bards; avoid it in future lustily. "Time" is fine; but there are better a good deal, I think. The volume does not lie by me; and after a long day's smarting fatigue, which has almost put out my eyes, (not blind however to your merits,) I dare not trust myself with long writing. The verses to Bloomfield are the sweetest in the collection. Religion is sometimes lugged in, as if it did not come naturally. I will go over carefully when I get my seeing, and exemplify. You have also too much of singing metre, such as requires no deep ear to make; lilting measure, in which you have done Woolman injustice. Strike at less superficial melodies. The piece on Nayler is more to my fancy.

My eye runs waters. But I will give you a fuller account some day. The book is a very pretty one in more than one sense. The decorative harp, perhaps, too ostentatious; a simple pipe preferable.

Farewell, and many thanks.

C. Lamb.

CCCXXVII. TO W. MARTER

E. I. H., 19 July [1824].

Dear Marter, — I have just received your letter, having returned from a month's holydays. My exertions for the London are, tho' not dead, in a dead sleep

for the present. If your club like scandal, Blackwood's is your magazine; if you prefer light articles, and humorous without offence, the New Monthly is very amusing. The best of it is by Horace Smith, the author of the Rejected Addresses. The Old Monthly has more of matter, information, but not so merry. I cannot safely recommend any others, as not knowing them, or knowing them to their disadvantage. Of Reviews, beside what you mention, I know of none except the Review on Hounslow Heath, which I take it is too expensive for your ordering. Pity me, that have been a Gentleman these four weeks, and am reduced in one day to the state of a ready writer. I feel, I feel my gentlemanly qualities fast oozing away —such as a sense of honour, neckcloths twice a day, abstinence from swearing, &c. The desk enters into my soul.

See my thoughts on business next Page.

SONNET

Who first invented work?—and bound the free
And holyday-rejoicing Spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of Business in the green fields, and the Town—
To plough, loom, spade, and (oh most sad!)
To this dry drudgery of the desk's dead wood?
Who but the Being unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! He, who his unglad
Task ever plies 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from whence are no returnings;
Where toiling & turmoiling ever & aye
He and his Thoughts keep pensive worky-day.

With many recollections of pleasanter times, my old compeer, happily released before me, Adieu.

C. LAMB.

CCCXXVIII. TO JOHN B. DIBDIN

Wensday, July 28, 1824.

My Dear Sir,—I must appear negligent in not having thanked you for the very pleasant books you sent me. *Arthur*, and the Novel, we have both of us read with unmixed satisfaction. They are full of quaint conceits, and running over with good-humour and good-nature. I naturally take little interest in story, but in these the manner and not the end is the interest; it is such pleasant travelling, one scarce cares whither it leads us. Pray express our pleasure to your father with my best thanks.

I am involved in a routine of visiting among the family of Barron Field, just returned from Botany Bay. I shall hardly have an open Evening before *Tuesday* next. Will you come to us then?

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

J. B. Dibdin, Esqre.,
Messrs Ranking & Co., 113, *Cheapside.*

CCCXXIX. TO THOMAS HOOD

[Postmarked Aug. 10, 1824.]

And what dost thou at the Priory? *Cucullus* non facit Monachum. English me that, and challenge old Lignum Janua to make a better.

My old New River has presented no extraordinary novelties lately; but there Hope sits day after day, speculating upon traditionary gudgeons. I think she has taken the fisheries. I now know the reason why our forefathers were denominated East and West Angles. Yet is there no lack of spawn; for I wash my hands in fishets that come through the pump every morning, thick as motelings,—little things like that, that perish untimely, and never taste the hook. You do not tell me of those romantic land bays that lie as thou goest to Lover's Seat: neither of that little churchling in the midst of woods (in the opposite

direction, nine furlongs from the Town), that seems dropped by the Angel that was tired of carrying two packages; marry, with the other he made shift to pick his flight to Loretto. Enquire out, and see my little Protestant Loretto. It stands apart from trace of human habitation; yet hath it pulpit, reading-desk, and trim front of massiest marble, as if Robinson Crusoe had reared it to soothe himself with old church-going images. I forget its Christian name, and what she-saint was its gossip.

You should also go to No. 13, Standgate Street,—a Baker's, who has the finest collection of marine monsters in ten sea counties,—sea dragons, polypi, mer-people, most fantastic. You have only to name the old gentleman in black (not the devil) that lodged with him a week (he'll remember us) last July, and he will show courtesy. He is flattered by the notice of the savans. His wife is the funniest thwarting little animal! They are decidedly the lions of green Hastings.

Well, I have made an end of my say. My epistolary time is gone by when I could have scribbled as long (I will not say as agreeable) as thine was to both of us. I am dwindled to notes and letterets. But, in good earnest, I shall be most happy to hail thy return to the waters of Old Sir Hugh. There is nothing like inland murmurs, fresh ripples, and our native minnows.

> "He sang in meeds how sweet the brooklets ran,
> To the rough ocean and red restless sands."

I design to give up smoking; but I have not yet fixed upon the equivalent vice. I must have *quid pro quo*; or *quo pro quid*, as Tom Woodgate would correct me. My service to him. C. L.

Thomas Hood, Esq.,
Mrs Fernor's,
Priory, Hastings.

CCCXXX. TO THE REV. HENRY F. CARY

East-India House, August 19, 1824.

Dear Sir,—I shall have much pleasure in dining with you on Wednesday next, with much shame that I have not noticed your kind present of the *Birds*, which I found very chirping and whimsical. I believe at the time I was daily thinking of paying you a visit, and put it off—till I should come. Somehow it slipt, and [I] must crave your pardon.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCCXXXI. TO BERNARD BARTON

August, 1824.

Dear B. B.,—I congratulate you on getting a house over your head. I find the comfort of it I am sure. At my town lodgings the Mistress was always quarrelling with our maid; and at my place of rustication the whole family were always beating one another, brothers beating sisters, (one a most beautiful girl lamed for life,) father beating sons and daughers, and son again beating his father, knocking him fairly down, a scene I never before witnessed, but was called out of bed by the unnatural blows, the parricidal colour of which, tho' my morals could not but condemn, yet my reason did heartily approve, and in the issue the house was quieter for a day or so than I had ever known. I am now all harmony and quiet, even to the sometimes wishing back again some of the old rufflings. There is something stirring in these civil broils.

The album shall be attended to. If I can light upon a few appropriate rhymes (but rhymes come with difficulty from me now) I shall beg a place in the neat margin of your young housekeeper.

The Prometheus *Unbound*, is a capital story. The Literal rogue! What if you had ordered "Elfrida" in *sheets*! she'd have been sent up I warrant you. Or

Rev. H. F. Cary, from the engraving by H. Robinson, after the picture by F. Cary.

bid him clasp his bible, (*i.e.* to his bosom), he'd have clapt on a brass clasp, no doubt.

I can no more understand Shelley than you can. His poetry is "thin sown with profit or delight." Yet I must point to your notice a sonnet conceiv'd and expressed with a witty delicacy. It is that addressed to one who hated him, but who could not persuade him to hate *him* again. His coyness to the other's passion (for hate demands a return as much as Love, and starves without it) is most arch and pleasant. Pray, like it very much.

For his theories and nostrums, they are oracular enough, but I either comprehend 'em not, or there is miching malace and mischief in 'em. But, for the most part, ringing with their own emptiness. Hazlitt said well of 'em—Many are the wiser and better for reading Shakspeare, but nobody was ever wiser or better for reading Shelley.

I wonder you will sow your correspondence on so barren a ground as I am, that make such poor returns. But my head aches at the bare thought of letter-writing. I wish all the ink in the ocean dried up, and would listen to the quills shivering up in the candle flame, like parching martyrs. The same indisposition to write has stopped my Elias, but you will see a futile effort in the next Number, "wrung from me with slow pain." The fact is, my head is seldom cool enough. I am dreadfully indolent. To have to do any thing, to order me a new coat, for instance, tho' my old buttons are shelled like beans, is an effort. My pen stammers like my tongue. What cool craniums those old inditers of Folios must have had. What a mortified pulse. Well, once more, I throw myself on your mercy—Wishing peace in thy new dwelling,

C. Lamb.

CCCXXXII. TO THE SAME

September 30, 1824.

Dear B. B.,—I am ill at these numbers, but if the above be not too mean to have a place in thy Daughter's sanctum, take them with pleasure. I assume that her name is Hannah, because it is a pretty scriptural cognomen. I began on another sheet of paper, and just as I had penn'd the second line of Stanza two, an ugly Blot, as big as this, fell, to illustrate my counsel. I am sadly given to blot, and modern blotting-paper gives no redress; it only smears, and makes it worse as for example. The only remedy is scratching out, which gives it a Clerkish look. The most innocent blots are made with red ink, and are rather ornamental. Marry, they are not always to be distinguished from the effusions of a cut finger.

Little Book, surnamed of *white*,
Clean as yet, and fair to sight,
Keep thy attribution right.

Never disproportion'd scrawl;
Ugly blot, that's worse than all;
On thy maiden clearness fall!

In each letter, here design'd,
Let the reader emblem'd find
Neatness of the owner's mind.

Gilded margins count a sin,
Let thy leaves attraction win
By the golden rules within;

Sayings fetch'd from sages old;
Laws which Holy Writ unfold,
Worthy to be graved in gold:

Lighter fancies not excluding;
Blameless wit, with nothing rude in
Sometimes mildly interluding

Amid strains of graver measure:
Virtue's self hath oft her pleasure
In sweet Muses' groves of leisure.

Riddles dark, perplexing sense;
Darker meanings of offence;
What but *shades*—be banish'd hence.

Whitest thoughts in whitest dress,
Candid meanings, best express
Mind of quiet Quakeress.

Well, I hope and trust thy Tick-doleru, or however you spell it, is vanished, for I have frightful impressions of that Tick, and do altogether hate it as an unpaid score, or the Tick of a Death-Watch. I take it to be a species of Vitus's dance (I omit the sanctity, writing to "one of the men called Friends.") I knew a young Lady who could dance no other; she danced thro' life, and very queer and fantastic were her steps. Heaven bless thee from such measures, and keep thee from the Foul Fiend, who delights to lead after False Fires in the night, Flibbertigibit, that gives the web and the pin etc., and I forget what else.

From my den, as Bunyan has it, 30th Sep. 1824.

C. L.

CCCXXXIII. TO MRS COLLIER

November 2, 1824.

Dear Mrs Collier,—We receive so much pig from your kindness, that I really have not phrase enough to vary successive acknowledgments. I think I shall get a printed form to serve on all occassions. To say it was young, crisp, short, luscious, dainty-toed, is but to say, what all its predecessors have been. It was eaten on Sunday and Monday, and doubts only exist as to which temperature it eat best, hot or cold. I incline to the latter. The petty-feet made a pretty surprising pre-gustation for supper on Saturday night, just as I was loathingly in expectation of brencheese. I spell as I speak.

I do not know what news to send you. You will have heard of Alsager's death, and your son John's

success in the Lottery. I say he is a wise man if he leaves off while he is well. The weather is wet to weariness; but Mary goes puddling about a-shopping after a gown for the winter. She wants it good and cheap. Now I hold that no good things are cheap, pig-presents always excepted. In this mournful weather I sit moping, where I now write, in an office dark as Erebus, jammed in between four walls, and writing by candle-light, most melancholy. Never see the light of the sun six hours in the day; and am surprised to find how pretty it shines on Sundays. I wish I were a Caravan driver, or a Penny Postman, to earn my bread in air and sunshine. Such a pedestrian as I am, to be tied by the legs, like a Fauntleroy, without the pleasure of his Exactions. I am interrupted here with an official question, which will take me up till it is time to go to dinner. So with repeated thanks, and both our kindest remembrances to Mr Collier and yourself, I conclude in haste,

Yours and his sincerely,

C. Lamb.

From my Den in Leadenhall,

On further inquiry, Alsager is not dead; but Mrs A. is brought to bed.

Mrs Collier,
Smallfield Place,
East Grinstead, Sussex.

CCCXXXIV. TO BRYAN WALLER PROCTER

Leadenhall, Nov. 11th, 1824.

My dear Procter,—I do agnise a shame in not having been to pay my congratulations to Mrs Procter and your happy self, but on Sunday (my only morning) I was engaged to a country walk; and in virtue of the hypostatical union between us, when Mary calls, it is understood that I call too, we being univocal.

But indeed I am ill at these ceremonious inductions. I fancy I was not born with a call on my head, though I have brought one down upon it with a vengeance. I love not to pluck that sort of frail crude, but to stay its ripening into visits. In probability Mary will be at Southampton Row this morning, and something of that kind be matured between you, but in any case not many hours shall elapse before I shake you by the hand.

Meantime give my kindest felicitations to Mrs Procter, and assure her I look forward with the greatest delight to our acquaintance. By the way, the deuce a bit of cake has come to hand, which hath an inauspicious look at first, but I comfort myself that that mysterious service hath the property of Sacramental Bread, which mice cannot nibble, nor time moulder.

I am married myself to a severe step-wife, who keeps me, not at bed and board, but at desk and board, and is jealous of my morning aberrations. I cannot slip out to congratulate kinder unions. It is well she leaves me alone o'nights,—the d——d Day-hag *Business*. She is even now peeping over me to see I am writing no love letters. I come, my dear—Where is the Indigo Sale Book?

Twenty adieus, my dear friends, till we meet.

Yours most truly,

C. Lamb.

CCCXXXV. TO MISS HUTCHINSON

Desk, 11 Nov., 1824.

My dear Miss Hutchinson,—Mary bids me thank you for your kind letter. We are a little puzzled about your whereabouts. Miss Wordsworth writes Torkay, and you have queerly made it Torquay. Now Tokay we have heard of, and Torbay, which we take to be the true *male* spelling of the place; but somewhere we fancy it to be on "Devon's leafy shores," where we heartily wish the kindly breezes may restore

all that is invalid among you. Robinson is returned, and speaks much of you all. We shall be most glad to hear good news from you from time to time. The best is, Procter is at last married. We have made sundry attempts to see the bride, but have accidently failed, she being gone out a gadding. We had promised our dear friends the Monkhouses—promised ourselves rather—a visit to them at Ramsgate; but I thought it best, and Mary seemed to have it at heart too, not to go far from home these last holydays. It is connected with a sense of unsettlement, and secretly I know she hoped that such abstinence would be friendly to her health. She certainly has escaped her sad yearly visitation, whether in consequence of it, or of faith in it, and we have to be thankful for a good 1824. To get such a notion into our heads may go a great way another year. Not that we quite confined ourselves; but assuming Islington to be head quarters, we made timid flights to Ware, Watford, &c., to try how the trouts tasted, for a night out or so, not long enough to make the sense of change oppressive, but sufficient to scour the rust of home. Coleridge is not returned from the sea. As a little scandal may divert you recluses, we were in the Summer dining at a clergyman of Southey's "Church of England," at Hertford, the same who officiated to Thurtell's last moments, and indeed an old contemporary Blue of C.'s and mine at school, After dinner we talked of C.; and F., who is a mighty good fellow in the main, but hath his cassock prejudices, inveighed against the moral character of C. I endeavoured to enlighten him on the subject, till having driven him out of some of his holds, he stopped my mouth at once by appealing to me whether it was not very well known that C. "at that very moment was living in a state of open adultery with Mrs * * * * * * at Highgate?" Nothing I could say, serious or bantering, after that, could remove the deep inrooted con-

viction of the whole company assembled that such was the case! Of course you will keep this quite close, for I would not involve my poor blundering friend, who I dare say believed it all thoroughly. My interference of course was imputed to the goodness of my heart, that could imagine nothing wrong, &c. Such it is if ladies will go gadding about with other people's husbands at watering places. How careful we should be to avoid the appearance of evil!

I thought this anecdote might amuse you. It is not worth resenting seriously; only I give it as a specimen of orthodox candour. O Southey, Southey, how long would it be before you would find one of us Unitarians propagating such unwarrantable scandal! Providence keep you all from the foul fiend, scandal, and send you back well and happy to dear Gloster Place! C. L.

Miss Hutchinson,
T. Monkhouse, Esq.,
Strand, Torkay, Torbay, Devon.

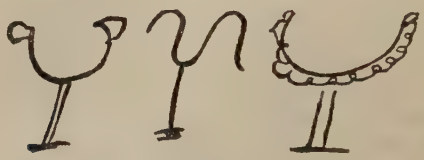
CCCXXXVI. TO BERNARD BARTON

December 1st, 1824.

Dear B. B.,—If Mr Mitford will send me a full and circumstantial description of his desired vases, I will transmit the same to a Gentleman resident at Canton, whom I think I have interest enough in to take the proper care for their execution. But Mr M. must have patience. China is a great way off, further perhaps than he thinks; and his next year's roses must be content to wither in a Wedgwood pot. He will please to say whether he should like his Arms upon them, &c. I send herewith some patterns which suggest themselves to me at the first blush of the subject, but he will probably consult his own taste after all.

The last pattern is obviously fitted for ranunculuses

only. The two former may indifferently hold daisies, marjoram, sweet-williams, and that sort. My friend in Canton is Inspector of Teas, his name is Ball;



and I can think of no better tunnel. I shall expect Mr M.'s decision.

Taylor and Hessey finding their magazine goes off very heavily at 2*s.* 6*d.* are prudently going to raise their price another shilling; and having already more authors than they want, intend to increase the number of them. If they set up against the New Monthly, they must change their present hands. It is not tying the dead carcase of a Review to a half-dead Magazine will do their business. It is like G. D. multiplying his volumes to make 'em sell better. When he finds one will not go off, he publishes two; two stick, he tries three; three hang fire, he is confident that four will have a better chance.

And now, my dear sir, trifling apart, the gloomy catastrophe of yesterday morning prompts a sadder vein. The fate of the unfortunate Fauntleroy makes me, whether I will or no, to cast reflecting eyes around on such of my friends as, by a parity of situation, are exposed to a similarity of temptation. My very style seems to myself to become more impressive than usual, with the change of theme. Who that standeth, knoweth but he may yet fall? Your hands as yet, I am most willing to believe, have never deviated into other's property. You think it impossible that you could ever commit so heinous an offence; but so thought Fauntleroy once; so have

thought many besides him, who at last have expiated as he hath done. You are as yet upright. But you are a Banker, at least the next thing to it. I feel the delicacy of the subject; but cash must pass thro' your hands, sometimes to a great amount. If in an unguarded hour ——— but I will hope better. Consider the scandal it will bring upon those of your persuasion. Thousands would go to see a Quaker hanged, that would be indifferent to the fate of a Presbyterian, or an Anabaptist. Think of the effect it would have on the sale of your poems alone; not to mention higher considerations! I tremble, I am sure, at myself, when I think that so many poor victims of the Law, at one time of their life made as sure of never being hanged as I in my presumption am too ready to do myself. What are we better than they? do we come into the world with different necks? Is there any distinctive mark under our left ears? are we unstrangulable? I ask you. Think of these things. I am shocked sometimes at the shape of my own fingers, not for their resemblance to the ape tribe (which is something), but for the exquisite adaptation of them to the purposes of picking, fingering, &c. No one that is so framed, I maintain it, but should tremble. C. L.

Postcript for your Daughter's eyes only.

Dear Miss,—Your pretty little letterets make me ashamed of my great straggling coarse handwriting. I wonder where you get pens to write so small. Sure they must be the pinions of a small wren, or a robin. If you write so in your Album, you must give us glasses to read by. I have seen a Lady's similar book all writ in following fashion. I think it pretty and fanciful.

O how I love in early dawn
To bend my steps o'er flowry lawn! *

[* The letters in these two lines are written alternately in red and black.—Ed.]

which I think has an agreeable variety to the eye, which I recommend to your notice, with friend Elia's best wishes.

CCCXXXVII. TO LEIGH HUNT

[1824.]

Illustrezzimo Signor,—I have obeyed your mandate to a tittle. I accompany this with a volume; but what have you done with the first I sent you? Have you swapped it with some lazzaroni for macaroni, or pledged it with a gondolierer for a passage? Peradventuri the Cardinal Gonsalvi took a fancy to it: his Eminence has done my Nearness an honour. 'Tis but a step to the Vatican. As you judge, my works do not enrich the workman; but I get vat I can for 'em. They keep dragging me on, a poor, worn mill-horse, in the eternal round of the damned magazine; but 'tis they are blind, not I. Colburn (where I recognize with delight the gay W. Honeycomb renovated) hath the ascendency. I was with the Novellos last week. They have a large, cheap house and garden, with a dainty library (magnificent) without books; but what will make you bless yourself, (I am too old for wonder,) something has touched the right organ in Vincentio at last. He attends a Wesleyan chapel on Kingsland Green. He at first tried to laugh it off; he only went for the singing; but the cloven foot—I retract — the lamb's trotters are at length apparent. Mary Isabella attributes it to a lightness induced by his headaches; but I think I see in it a less accidental influence. Mr Clark is at perfect staggers! the whole fabric of his infidelity is shaken. He has no one to join him in his horse-insults and indecent obstreperousnesses against Christianity; for Holmes (the bonny Holmes) is gone to Salisbury to be organist, and Isabella and the Clark make but a feeble quorum. The children have all neat little clasped pray-books;

and I have laid out seven shillings and eight-pence in Watts's Hymns for Christmas presents for them. The eldest girl alone holds out. She has been at Boulogne, skirting upon the vast focus of Atheism, and imported bad principles in patois French. But the strongholds are crumbling. N. appears as yet to have but a confused notion of the Atonement. It makes him giddy, he says, to think much about it; but such giddiness is spiritual sobriety. Well, Byron is gone; and —— is now the best poet in England. Fill up the gap to your fancy. Barry Cornwall has at last carried the pretty A[nne] S[kipper]. They are just in the treacle-moon. Hope it won't clog his wings (gaum, we used to say at school). Mary, my sister, has worn me out with eight weeks' cold and toothache, her average complement in the Winter; and it will not go away. She is otherwise well, and reads novels all day long. She has had an exempt year, a good year; for which, forgetting the minor calamity, she and I are most thankful. Alsager is in a flourishing house, with wife and children about him, in Mecklenburg Square,—almost too fine to visit. Barron Field is come home from Sydney; but as yet I can hear no tidings of a pension. He is plump and friendly; his wife, really a very superior woman. He resumes the bar. I have got acquainted with Mr Irving, the Scotch preacher, whose fame must have reached you. He is an humble disciple at the foot of Gamaliel S. T. C. Judge how his own sectarists must stare, when I tell you he has dedicated a book to S. T. C., acknowledging to have learnt more of the nature of faith, Christianity, and Christian Church, from him than from all the men he ever conversed with! He is a most amiable, sincere, modest man in a room, this Boanerges in the temple. Mrs Montague told him the dedication would do him no good. "That shall be a reason for doing it," was his answer. Judge, now, whether this man be a quack. Dear H., take this imperfect notelet for a

letter: it looks so much the more like conversing on nearer terms. Love to all the Hunts, old friend Thornton, and all.

Yours ever,

C. LAMB.

CCCXXXVIII. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Colebrook Cottage, Islington, 7 Jan., 1825.

Dear Allsop,—I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of a draft on Messrs Wms. for 81. 11. 3. which I haste to cash in the present alarming state of the money market. Hurst and Robinson gone. I have imagined a Chorus of ill-used Authors singing on the Occasion:

> What should we when Booksellers break?
> We should rejoice.

Da capo.

We regret exceedingly Mrs Allsopp's being unwell. Mary or both will come and see her soon. The frost is cruel, and we have both colds. I take Pills again, which battle with your Wine; and Victory hovers doubtful. By the by, tho' not disinclined to presents, I remember our bargain to take a dozen at sale price, and must demur.

With once again thanks and best loves to Mrs A.

Turn over—Yours,

C. LAMB.

CCCXXXIX. TO JOHN B. DIBDIN

E.I.H., January 11, 1825.

My dear Sir,—Pray return my best thanks to your father for his little volume. It is like all of his I have seen, spirited, good-humoured, and redolent of the wit and humour of a century ago. He should have lived with Gay and his set. The *Chessiad* is so clever that I relish'd it in spite of my total ignorance

of the game. I have it not before me, but I remember a capital simile of the Charwoman letting in her Watchman husband, which is better than Butler's Lobster turned to Red. Hazard is a grand character, Jove in his Chair. When you are disposed to leave your one room for my six, Colebrook is where it was, and my sister begs me to add that as she is disappointed of meeting your sister *your way*, we shall be most happy to see her *our way* when you have an evening to spare. Do not stand on ceremonies and introductions, but come at once. I need not say that if you can induce your father to join the party, it will be so much the pleasanter. Can you name an evening *next week*? I give you long credit.

Meantime am, as usual, yours truly,

C. L.

When I saw the *Chessiad* advertised by C. D. the younger, I hoped it might be yours. What title is left for you—

Charles Dibdin *the younger*, *junior*.

Or No, you are Timothy.

CCCXL. TO MISS HUTCHINSON

January 20th, 1825.

Dear Miss H.,—Thank you for a noble goose, which wanted only the massive incrustation that we used to pick-axe open, about this season, in old Gloucester Place. When shall we eat another goose pie together? The pheasant, too, must not be forgotten; twice as big, and half as good as a Partridge. You ask about the editor of the *London*; I know of none. This first specimen is flat and pert enough to justify subscribers who grudge t'other shilling. De Quincy's "Parody" was submitted to him before printed, and had his *Probatum*. The "Horns" is in a poor taste, resembling the most laboured papers

in the *Spectator*. I had signed it "Jack Horner"; but Taylor and Hessey said it would be thought an offensive article unless I put my known signature to it, and wrung from me my slow consent. But did you read the "Memoir of Liston"?—and did you guess whose it was? Of all the lies I ever put off, I value this most. It is from top to toe, every paragraph, Pure Invention, and has passed for gospel; has been republished in newspapers, and in the penny play-bills of the night, as an authentic account. I shall certainly go to the naughty man some day for my fibbings. In the next Number I figure as a theologian! and have attacked my late brethren, the Unitarians. What Jack-Pudding tricks I shall play next, I know not; I am almost at the end of my tether. Coleridge is quite blooming, but his book has not budded yet. I hope I have spelt Torquay right now, and that this will find you all mending, and looking forward to a London flight with the Spring. Winter, *we* have had none, but plenty of foul weather. I have lately picked up an epigram which pleased me—

"Two noble earls, whom if I quote,
Some folks might call me sinner,
The one invented half a coat,
The other half a dinner.

The plan was good, as some will say;
And fitted to console one;
Because, in this poor starving day,
Few can afford a whole one."

I have made the lame one still lamer by imperfect memory; but spite of bald diction, a little done to it might improve it into a good one. You have nothing else to do at Torquay. Suppose you try it. Well, God bless you all, as wishes Mary most sincerely, with many thanks for letter, &c.

ELIA.

The brevity of this is owing to scratching it off at my desk amid expected interruptions. By habit I can write letters only at office.

CCCXLI. TO J. B. DIBDIN

[Postmark: Islington.] January 1825.

Dear D.,—My sister's cold continues strong and obstinate. We therefore propose to see you etc. sometime in the latter end of next week, instead of this. But *come you must*.

Believe us, with apologies to your sister,

Yours sincerely,
C. LAMB.

CCCXLII. TO THE SAME

Post mark
Feb. 8,
1825.
Leadenhall Street.

Dear Sir,—We expect you of course to-morrow. As to the time, 6 is pleasanter to us than 7, & 7 than 8. But at any hour we shall be most glad to see you and sisters.

Yours &c.,
C. L.

Tuesday.

CCCXLIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

February 10th, 1825.

Dear B. B.,—I am vexed that ugly paper should have offended. I kept it as clear from objectionable phrases as possible, and it was Hessey's fault, and my weakness, that it did not appear anonymous. No more of it, for God's sake. The Spirit of the Age is by Hazlitt, the characters of Coleridge, &c. he had done better in former publications, the praise and the abuse much stronger, &c.; but the new ones are capitally done. Horne Tooke is a matchless portrait.

My advice is to borrow it, rather than buy it. I have it. He has laid too many colours on my likeness, but I have had so much injustice done me in my own name, that I make a rule of accepting as much over-measure to Elia as Gentlemen think proper to bestow. Lay it on and spare not.

Your Gentleman Brother sets my mouth a-watering after Liberty. O that I were kicked out of Leadenhall with every mark of indignity, and a competence in my fob. The birds of the air would not be so free as I should. How I would prance and curvet it and pick up cowslips, and ramble about purposeless, as an idiot! The Author-mometor is a good fancy. I have caused great speculation in the dramatic (not *thy*) world by a lying Life of Liston, all pure invention. The Town has swallowed it, and it is copied into Newspapers, Play-bills, &c., as authentic. You do not know the Droll, and possibly missed reading the article (in our first Number, new series). A life more improbable for him to have lived would not be easily invented. But your rebuke, coupled with "Dream on J. Bunyan," checks me. I'd rather do more in my favourite way, but feel dry. I must laugh sometimes. I am poor Hypochondriacus, and *not* Liston.

Second No. is all trash. What are T. and H. about? It is whip syllabub, "thin sown with aught of profit or delight." Thin sown! not a germ of fruit or corn! Why did poor Scott die! There was comfort in writing with such associates as were his little band of Scribblers, some gone away, some affronted away, and I am left as the solitary widow looking for water-cresses.

The only clever hand they have is Darley, who has written on the Dramatists, under name of John Lacy. But his function seems suspended.

I have been harassed more than usually at office, which has stopt my correspondence lately. I write

with a confused aching head, and you must accept this apology for a letter.

I will do something soon, if I can, as a peace-offering to the Queen of the East Angles. Something she shan't scold about. For the Present, farewell.

Thine, C. L.

I am fifty years old this day. Drink my health.

CCCXLIV. TO THOMAS MANNING

[Early in 1825.]

My dear M.,—You might have come inopportunely a week since, when we had an inmate. At present and for as long as *ever* you like, our castle is at your service. I saw T[uthill] yesternight, who has done for me what may

> "To all my nights and days to come,
> Give solely sovran sway and masterdom."

But I dare not hope, for fear of disappointment. I cannot be more explicit at present. But I have it under his own hand, that I am *non*-capacitated, (I cannot write it *in*-) for business. O joyous imbecility! Not a susurration of this to *any body*!

Mary's love. C. LAMB.

CCCXLV. TO BERNARD BARTON

Wednesday, March 23rd, 1825.

Dear B. B.,—I have had no impulse to write, or attend to any single object but myself for weeks past. My single self. I by myself I—I am sick of hope deferred. The grand wheel is in agitation, that is to turn up my Fortune, but round it rolls, and will turn up nothing. I have a glimpse of Freedom, of becoming a Gentleman at large, but I am put off from day to day. I have offered my resignation, and it is

neither accepted nor rejected. Eight weeks am I kept in this fearful suspense. Guess what an absorbing stake I feel it. I am not conscious of the existence of friends present or absent. The E. I. Directors alone can be that thing to me—or not.

I have just learn'd that nothing will be decided this week. Why the next? Why any week? It has fretted me into an itch of the fingers, I rub 'em against Paper and write to you, rather than not allay this Scorbuta.

While I can write, let me abjure you to have no doubts of Irving. Let Mr Mitford drop his disrespect. Irving has prefixed a dedication (of a Missionary Subject, first part) to Coleridge, the most beautiful cordial and sincere. He there acknowledges his obligation to S. T. C. for his knowledge of Gospel truths, the nature of a Christian Church, &c., to the talk of S. T. C. (at whose Gamaliel feet he sits weekly), rather or more than to that of all the men living. This from him, the great dandled and petted Sectarian—to a religious character so equivocal in the world's Eye as that of S. T. C., so foreign to the Kirk's estimate.

Can this man be a quack? The language is as affecting as the spirit of the dedication. Some friend told him, "This dedication will do you no Good," *i.e.* not in the world's repute, or with your own people. "That is a reason for doing it," quoth Irving.

I am thoroughly pleased with him. He is firm, out-speaking, intrepid—and docile as a pupil of Pythagoras.

You must like him.

Yours, in tremors of painful hope,

C. Lamb.

CCCXLVI. TO B. W. PROCTER

[No date or postmark.]

Dear P,—We shall be most glad to see you, though more glad to have seen double *you*, but we will expect finer walking-weather. Bring my *Congreve*, second vol., in your hand. I have 2 books of yours lock'd up, but how shall I tell it—*horresco referens*—that I miss, and can't possibly account for it, *Hollis on Johnson's Milton*! I will march the town thro', but I will repair the loss. You will be sorry to hear that poor Monkhouse died on Saturday at Clifton.

C. L.

CCCXLVII. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Colebrook Cottage, 6th April, 1825.

Dear Wordsworth,—I have been several times meditating a letter to you concerning the good thing which has befallen me, but the thought of poor Monkhouse came across me. He was one that I had exulted in the prospect of congratulating me. He and you were to have been the first participators, for indeed it has been ten weeks since the first motion of it. Here am I then, after thirty-three years' slavery, sitting in my own room at eleven o'clock this finest of all April mornings, a freed man, with £441 a year for the remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who outlived his annuity and starved at ninety: £441, *i.e.* £450, with a deduction of £9 for a provision secured to my sister, she being survivor, the pension guaranteed by Act Georgii Tertii, &c.

I came home FOR EVER on Tuesday in last week. The incomprehensibleness of my condition overwhelmed me. It was like passing from life into eternity. Every year to be as long as three, *i.e.* to have three times as much real time (time that is my own) in it! I wandered about thinking I was happy, but feeling I was not. But that tumultuousness is

passing off, and I begin to understand the nature of the gift. Holydays, even the annual month, were always uneasy joys; their conscious fugitiveness; the craving after making the most of them. Now, when all is holyday, there are no holydays. I can sit at home, in rain or shine, without a restless impulse for walkings. I am daily steadying, and shall soon find it as natural to me to be my own master, as it has been irksome to have had a master. Mary wakes every morning with an obscure feeling that some good has happened to us.

Leigh Hunt and Montgomery, after their releasements, describe the shock of their emancipation much as I feel mine. But it hurt their frames. I eat, drink, and sleep as sound as ever. I lay no anxious schemes for going hither and thither, but take things as they occur. Yesterday I excursioned twenty miles; to-day I write a few letters. Pleasuring was for fugitive play-days; mine are fugitive only in the sense that life is fugitive. Freedom and life co-existent!

At the foot of such a call upon you for gratulation, I am ashamed to advert to that melancholy event. Monkhouse was a character I learned to love slowly, but it grew upon me, yearly, monthly, daily. What a chasm has it made in our pleasant parties! His noble friendly face was always coming before me, till this hurrying event in my life came, and for the time has absorbed all interest; in fact it has shaken me a little. My old desk companions, with whom I have had such merry hours, seem to reproach me for removing my lot from among them. They were pleasant creatures; but to the anxieties of business, and a weight of possible worse ever impending, I was not equal. Tuthill and Gilman give me my certicates. I laughed at the friendly lie implied in them; but my sister shook her head, and said it was all true. Indeed, this last Winter I was jaded out: Winters

were always worse than other parts of the year, because the spirits are worse, and I had no day-light. In Summer I had day-light evenings. The relief was hinted to me from a superior Power, when I, poor slave, had not a hope but that I must wait another seven years with Jacob: and lo! the Rachel which I coveted is brought to me!

Have you read the noble dedication of Irving's "Missionary Orations" to S. T. C.? Who shall call this man a quack hereafter? What the Kirk will think of it neither I nor Irving care. When somebody suggested to him that it would not be likely to do him good, videlicet, among his own people, "That is a reason for doing it," was his noble answer. That Irving thinks he has profited mainly by S. T. C., I have no doubt. The very style of the Dedication shows it.

Communicate my news to Southey, and beg his pardon for my being so long acknowledging his kind present of the "Church," which circumstances, having no reference to himself, prevented at the time. Assure him of my deep respect and friendliest feelings.

Divide the same, or rather each take the whole to you—I mean you and all yours. To Miss Hutchinson I must write separate.

Farewell! and end at last, long selfish letter.

C. LAMB.

CCCXLVIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

April 1825.

Dear B. B.,—My spirits are so tumultuary with the novelty of my recent emancipation, that I have scarce steadiness of hand, much more mind, to compose a letter.

I am free, B. B.—free as air.

The little bird that wings the sky
Knows no such Liberty!

I was set free on Tuesday in last week at four o'clock.

I came home for ever!

I have been describing my feelings as well as I can to Wordsworth in a long letter and don't care to repeat. Take it briefly that for a few days I was painfully oppressed by so mighty a change, but it is becoming daily more natural to me.

I went and sat among 'em all at my old thirty-three years' desk yester morning; and deuce take me if I had not yearnings at leaving all my old pen-and-ink fellows, merry sociable lads, at leaving them in the Lurch, fag, fag, fag!

The comparison of my own superior felicity gave me any thing but pleasure.

B. B., I would not serve another seven years for seven hundred thousand pounds.

I have got £441 net for life, sanctioned by Act of Parliament, with a provision for Mary if she survives me.

I will live another 50 years, or if I live but 10, they will be thirty, reckoning the quantity of real time in them, *i.e.* the time that is a man's own.

Tell me how you like "Barbara S." Will it be received in atonement for the foolish vision, I mean by the Lady.

A-propos, I never saw Mrs Crauford in my life; nevertheless 'tis all true of Somebody.

Address me, in future, Colebrook Cottage, Islington. I am really nervous, (but that will wear off,) so take this brief announcement.

Yours truly, C. L.

CHAPTER III

'TWIXT ISLINGTON AND ENFIELD—UNEASY LEISURE: AND "THE EVERY-DAY BOOK"

APRIL 1825—SEPTEMBER 1827

CCCXLIX. TO MISS HUTCHINSON

April 18, 1825.

Dear Miss Hutchinson,—You want to know all about my gaol delivery. Take it then. About twelve weeks since I had a sort of intimation that a resignation might be well accepted from me. This was a kind bird's whisper. On that hint I spake. Gilman and Tuthill furnished me with certificates of wasted health and sore spirits — not much more than the truth, I promise you—and for nine weeks I was kept in a fright. I had gone too far to recede, and they might take advantage, and dismiss me with a much less sum than I had reckoned on. However, liberty came at last, with a liberal provision. I have given up what I could have lived on in the country; but have enough to live here, by management and scribbling occasionally. I would not go back to my prison for seven years longer for £10,000 a year; seven years after one is fifty, is no trifle to give up. Still I am a young *pensioner*, and have served but thirty-three years; very few, I assure you, retire before forty, forty-five, or fifty years' service.

You will ask how I bear my freedom? Faith, for some days I was staggered; could not comprehend the magnitude of my deliverance; was confused, giddy; knew not whether I was on my head or my heel, as they say. But those giddy feelings have

gone away, and my weather-glass stands at a degree or two above

CONTENT.

I go about quiet, and have none of that restless hunting after recreation which made holydays formerly uneasy joys. All being holydays, I feel as if I had none, as they do in heaven, where 'tis all red-letter days. I have a kind letter from the Wordsworths, *congratulatory* not a little. It is a damp, I do assure you, amid all my prospects, that I can receive *none* from a quarter upon which I had calculated, almost more than from any, upon receiving congratulations. I had grown to like poor Monkhouse more and more. I do not esteem a soul living or not living more warmly than I had grown to esteem and value him. But words are vain. We have none of us to count upon many years. That is the only cure for sad thoughts. If only some died, and the rest were permanent on earth, what a thing a friend's death would be then!

I must take leave, having put off answering a load of letters to this morning; and this, alas! is the first. Our kindest remembrances to Mrs Monkhouse,

And believe us yours most truly,

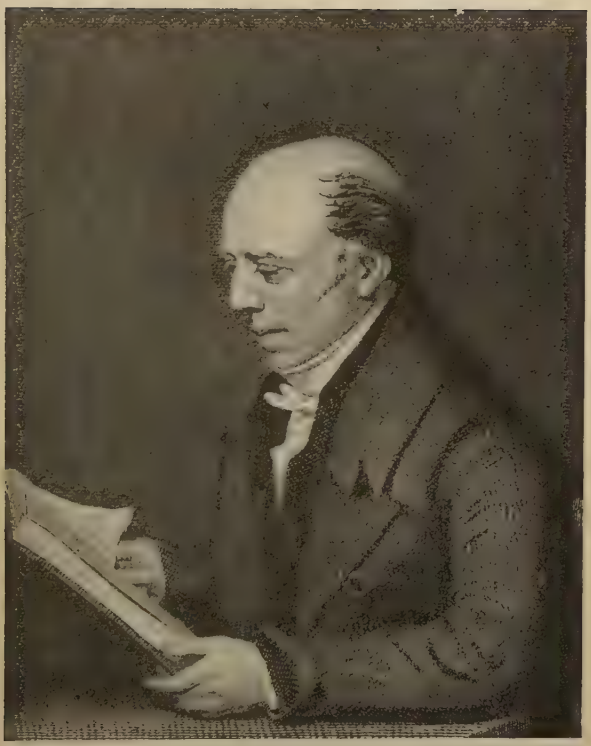
C. LAMB.

CCCL. TO VINCENT NOVELLO

Tuesday, Colebrook [April 25, 1825].

Dear Novello,—My sister's cold is as obstinate as an old Handelian, whom a modern amateur is trying to convert to Mozart-ism. As company must, and always does, injure it, Emma and I propose to come to you in the evening of to-morrow, *instead of meeting here*. An early bread and cheese supper at half-past eight will oblige us. Loves to the bearer of many children.

C. LAMB.



Vincent Novello, from an engraving by W. Humphrys, after the painting by E. P. Novello.

I sign with a black seal, that you may [begin] to think her cold has killed Mary; which will be an agreeable unsurprise when you read the note.

V. Novello, Esq., Green, Shacklewell.

CCCLI. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[About May 12th, 1825.]

Dear W.,—I write post-haste to ensure a frank. Thanks for your hearty congratulations. I may now date from the sixth week of my "Hegira, or Flight from Leadenhall." I have lived so much in it, that a Summer seems already past; and 'tis but early May yet with you and other people. How I look down on the slaves and drudges of the world! Its inhabitants are a vast cotton-web of spin-spin-spinners! O the carking cares! O the money-grubbers! Sempiternal muckworms!

Your Virgil I have lost sight of, but suspect it is in the hands of Sir G. Beaumont; I think that circumstances made me shy of procuring it before. Will you write to him about it?—and your commands shall be obeyed to a tittle.

Coleridge has just finished his prize Essay, by which, if it get the prize, he'll touch an additional £100 I fancy. His book, too, ("Commentary on Bishop Leighton,") is quite finished, and *penes* Taylor and Hessey.

In the *London Magazine*, which is just out, (1st of May,) are two papers entitled the "Superannuated Man," which I wish you to see; and also, 1st of April, a little thing called "Barbara S———," a story gleaned from Miss Kelly. The *London Magazine*, if you can get it, will save my enlargement upon the topic of my manumission.

I must scribble to make up my *hiatus crumenæ*: for there are so many ways, pious and profligate, of getting rid of money in this vast city and suburbs,

that I shall miss my THIRDS. But *couragio*! I despair not. Your kind hint of the cottage was well thrown out; an anchorage for *age* and school of economy, when necessity comes; but without this latter, I have an unconquerable terror of changing place. It does not agree with us. I say it from conviction; else I do sometimes ruralize in fancy.

Some d—d people are come in, and I must finish abruptly. By d—d, I only mean deuced. 'Tis these suitors of Penelope that makes it necessary to *authorize* a little for gin and mutton, and such trifles.

Excuse my abortive scribble.
Yours, not in more haste than heart,

C. L.

Love and recollects to all the Wms., Doras, Marys round your Wrekin.

Mary is capitally well. Do write to Sir G. B., for I am shyish of applying to him.

CCCLII. TO MISS NORRIS

[No superscription.] [1825.]

Hypochondriac. We can't reckon avec any certainty for une heure . . . as follows:

England

I like the Taxes when they're not too many,
  I like a sea-coal fire when not too dear;
I like a beefsteak, too, as well as any,
  Have no objection to a pot of beer;
I like the *weather when it's not too rainy*,
  That is, I like two months of every year.

Italy

I also like to dine on becaficas,
  To see the sun set, sure he'll rise to-morrow,
Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as
  A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow.
But with all heaven t'himself; that day will break as
  Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to borrow
That sort of farthing candlelight which glimmers
Where reeking London's smoky cauldron simmers.

Kind regards to Mama and remembrances to Frere Richard. Dieu remercie mon frere can't lizer Fransay. I have written this letter with a most villainous pen—called a Patent one.

En finis je remarque I was not offensé a votre fransay et I was not embarrassé to make it out. Adieu.

I have not quite done that——instead of your

company in Miss Norris; epistle has determined me to come if heaven, earth, and myself can compass it. Amen. [No signature.]

CCCLIII. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Tuesday, May 29, 1825.

Dear A.,—I am as mad as the devil—but I had engaged myself and Mary to accompany Mrs Kenny to Kentish-Town to dinner at a common friend's on Friday, before I knew of Mary's engaging you.

Can you and Mrs A. exchange the day for Sunday, or what other.

Write.

Success to the Gnomes!

C. LAMB.

CCCLIV. TO BERNARD BARTON

July 2nd, 1825.

My dear B. B.,—My nervous attack has so unfitted me that I have not courage to sit down to a Letter. My poor pittance in the London you will see is drawn from my sickness. Your Book is very acceptable to me, because most of it is new to me, but your Book itself we cannot thank you for more sincerely than for the introduction you favoured us with to Anne Knight. Now I cannot write *Mrs* Anne Knight for the life of me. She is a very pleas——, but I won't write all we have said of her so often to ourselves, because I suspect you would read it to her. Only give my sister's and my kindest *remembrances* to her, and how glad we are we can say that word. If ever she come to Southwark again, I count upon another pleasant Bridge walk with her. Tell her, I got home, time for a rubber; but poor Tryphena will not understand that phrase of the worldlings.

I am hardly able to appreciate your volume now: but I liked the dedication much, and the apology for

your bald burying grounds. To Shelley, but *that* is not new. To the young vesper-singer Great Bealings, Playford, and what not.

If there be a cavil, it is that the topics of religious consolation, however beautiful, are repeated till a sort of triteness attends them, It seems as if you were for ever losing friends' children by death, and reminding their parents of the Resurrection. Do children die so often, and so good, in your parts? The topic taken from the consideration that they are snatch'd away from *possible vanities*, seems hardly sound; for to an omniscient eye their conditional failings must be one with their actual; but I am too unwell for Theology.

Such as I am, I am yours and A. K's. truly,

C. LAMB.

CCCLV. TO S. T. COLERIDGE

Islington, July 2nd, 1825.

We are going off to Enfield, to Alsopp's, for a day or two, with some intention of succeeding them in their lodging for a time, for this damn'd nervous fever (*vide London Magazine* for July) indisposes me for seeing any friends, and never any poor devil was so befriended as I am. Do you know any poor solitary human that wants that cordial to life, a true friend? I can spare him twenty; he shall have 'em good cheap. I have gallipots of 'em—genuine balm of cares—a-going—a-going—a-going. Little plagues plague me a thousand times more than ever. I am like a disembodied soul—in this my eternity. I feel every thing entirely, all in all and all in &c. This price I pay for liberty, but am richly content to pay it. The Odes are 4-5ths done by Hood, a silentish young man you met at Islington one day, an invalid. The rest are Reynolds's, whose sister H., has recently married. I have not had a broken finger in them.

They are hearty, good natured things, and I would

put my name to 'em cheerfully, if I could as honestly. I complimented them in a Newspaper, with an abatement for those puns you laud so.—They are generally an excess. A Pun is a thing of too much consequence to be thrown in as a make-weight. You shall read one of the addresses over, and miss the puns, and it shall be quite as good and better than when you discover 'em. A Pun is a noble thing *per se*: O never lug it in as an accessory. A Pun is a sole object for reflection (*vide my* aids to that recessment from a savage state), it is entire, it fills the mind: it is perfect as a sonnet, better. It limps asham'd in the train and retinue of Humour: it knows it should have an establishment of its own. The one, for instance, I made the other day; I forget what it was.

Hood will be gratify'd, as much as I am, by your mistake. I like "Grimaldi" the best, it is true painting of abstract Clownery, and that precious concrete of a clown: and the rich succession of images, and words almost such, in the 1st half of the Mag. Ignotum. Your picture of the Camel, that would not or could not thread your nice needle-eye of subtilisms, was confirm'd by Elton, who perfectly appreciated his abrupt departure. Elton borrowed the "Aids" from Hessey (by the way, what is your Enigma about Cupid? I am Cytherea's son, if I understand a tittle of it), and returned it next day, saying that twenty years ago, when he was pure, he *thought* as you do now, but that he now thinks as you did twenty years ago. But E. seems a very honest fellow. Hood has just come in; his sick eyes sparkled into health when he read your approbation. They had meditated a copy for you, but postponed it till a neater second edition, which is at hand.

Have you heard *The Creature* at the Opera House —Signor Non-vir sed veluti vir? Like Orpheus, he is said to draw Stocks, &c., after him. A picked raisin for a sweet banquet of sounds; but I affect not

these exotics—Nos durum genus, as mellifluous Ovid hath it. Fanny Holcroft is just come in, with her paternal severity of aspect. She has frozen a bright thought which should have follow'd. She makes us marble with too little conceiving. 'Twas respecting the Signor, whom I honour on this side idolatry. Well, more of this anon.

We are setting out to walk to Enfield after our Beans and Bacon which are just smoking—

Kindest remembrances to the G's Ever

From Islington
day 3d Month of my Hegira
or Flight from Leadenhall

C. L. OLIM CLERICUS.

CCCLVI. TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

[No Date.]

Dear J. H. P.,—Thank you. I shall certainly attend your farce if in town; but as 'tis possible I shall ruralize this week, I will have no orders of you till next week. All Sundays I am ready to ambulate with you, but will make no engagement for this week,—to leave the poor residue of my holidays unembarrassed.

Yours truly,
C. L.

CCCLVII. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[Enfield, Thursday, July, 1825.]

Dear Allsop,—We are bent upon coming here to-morrow for a few weeks. Despatch a Porter to me this evening, or by nine to-morrow morning, to say how far it will interfere with your proposed coming down on Saturday. If the house will hold us, we can be together while we stay.

Yours,
C. LAMB.

After a hot walk.

CCCLVIII. TO THE SAME

[About July 20, 1825.]

Dear Allsop,—It is too hot to write. Here we are, having turned you out of your beds, but willing to resign in your favour, or make any shifts with you. Our best Love's to Mrs Allsop, from Mrs Leishman's, this warm Saturday.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

This damned afternoon sun! Thanks for your note, which came in more than good time.

CCCLIX. TO WILLIAM HONE

[Enfield, 25 July, 1825.]

Dear H.,—The Quotidian came in as pleasantly as it was looked for at breakfast time yesterday. You have repaid my poor stanzas with interest. This last interlineation is one of those instances of affectation rightly applied. Read the sentence without it, how bald it is! Your idea of "worsted in the dog-days" was capital.

We are here so comfortable that I am confident we shall stay one month, from this date, most probably longer; so if you please, you can cut your out-of-town room for that time. I have sent up my petit farce altered; and Harley is at the theatre now. It cannot come out for some weeks. When it does, we think not of leaving here, but to borrow a bed of you for the night.

I write principally to say that the 4th of August is coming,—Dogget's Coat and Badge Day on the water. You will find a good deal about him in *Cibber's Apology*, octavo, facing the window; and something haply in a thin blackish quarto among the plays, facing the fireside.

You have done with mad dogs; else there is a print of Rowlandson's, or somebody's, of people in

pursuit of [one] in a village, which might have come in: also Goldsmith's verses.

Mary's kind remembrance.

C. LAMB.

Mr Hone,
Colebrook Cottage,
Islington.

CCCLX. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Enfield [? August, 1825].

Dear A.,—Mary is afraid lest the calico and Handkerchiefs have miscarried which you were to send. Have you sent 'em?

Item a bill with 'em including the former silks, & balance struck in a Tradesman-like way.

Yours truly,

C. L.

CCCLXI. TO BERNARD BARTON

August 10th, 1825.

We shall be soon again at Colebrook.

Dear B. B.,—You must excuse my not writing before, when I tell you we are on a visit at Enfield, where I do not feel it natural to sit down to a Letter. It is at all times an exertion. I had rather talk with you, and Anne Knight, quietly at Colebrook Lodge, over the matter of your last. You mistake me when you express misgivings about my relishing a series of scriptural poems. I wrote confusedly, what I meant to say was, that one or two consolatory poems on deaths would have had a more condensed effect than many. Scriptural—devotional topics—admit of infinite variety. So far from poetry tiring me because religious, I can read, and I say it seriously, the homely old version of the Psalms in our Prayer Books for an hour or two together sometimes without sense of weariness.

I did not express myself clearly about what I think a false topic insisted on so frequently in consolatory addresses on the death of Infants. I know something like it is in Scripture, but I think humanly spoken. It is a natural thought, a sweet fallacy to the Survivors—but still a fallacy. If it stands on the doctrine of this being a probationary state, it is liable to this dilemma. Omniscience, to whom possibility must be clear as act, must know of the child, what it would hereafter turn out: if good, then the topic is false to say it is secured from falling into future wilfulness, vice, &c. If bad, I do not see how its exemption from certain future overt acts, by being snatched away, at all tells in its favour. You stop the arm of a murderer, or arrest the finger of a pickpurse, but is not the guilt incurred as much by the intent as if never so much acted? Why children are hurried off, and old reprobates of a hundred left, whose trial humanly we may think was complete at fifty, is among the obscurities of providence. The very notion of a state of probation has darkness in it. The all-knower has no need of satisfying his eyes by seeing what we will do, when he knows before what we will do. Methinks we might be condemn'd before commission. In these things we grope and flounder, and if we can pick up a little human comfort that the child taken is snatched from vice, (no great compliment to it by the by,) let us take it. And as to where an untried child goes, whether to join the assembly of its elders who have borne the heat of the day—fire-purified martyrs and torment-sifted confessors—what know we? We promise heaven, methinks, too cheaply, and assign large revenues to minors, incompetent to manage them. Epitaphs run upon this topic of consolation, till the very frequency induces a cheapness. Tickets for admission into Paradise are sculptured out at a penny a letter, twopence a syllable, &c. It is all a mystery, and the more I try to express my meaning (having

none that is clear), the more I founder. Finally, write what your own conscience, which to you is the unerring judge, deems best, and be careless about the whimsies of such a half-baked notionist as I am. We are here in a most pleasant country, full of walks, and idle to our hearts' desire. Taylor has dropt the *London.* It was indeed a dead weight. It has got in the Slough of Despond. I shuffle off my part of the pack, and stand like Christian with light and merry shoulders. It had got silly, indecorous, pert, and every thing that is bad. Both our kind *remembrances* to Mrs K. and yourself, and stranger's greeting to Lucy—is it Lucy or Ruth?—that gathers wise sayings in a Book.

My kind remembrances to your daughter and A. K. Always,

C. LAMB.

CCCLXII. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

August 10th, 1825.

Dear Southey,—You'll know who this letter comes from by opening slap-dash upon the text, as in the good old times. I never could come into the custom of envelopes. 'Tis a modern foppery; the Plinian correspondence gives no hint of such. In singleness of sheet and meaning, then, I thank you for your little book. I am ashamed to add a codicil of thanks for your "Book of the Church." I scarce feel competent to give an opinion of the latter; I have not reading enough of that kind to venture at it. I can only say the fact, that I have read it with attention and interest. Being, as you know, not quite a Churchman, I felt a jealousy at the Church taking to herself the whole deserts of Christianity, Catholic and Protestant, from Druid-extirpation downwards. I call all good Christians The Church, Capillarians and all. But I am in too light a humour to touch these

Greta Hall

matters. May all our Churches flourish! Two things staggered me in the poem, (and one of them staggered both of us). I cannot away with a beautiful series of verses, as I protest they are, commencing "Jenner." 'Tis like a choice banquet opened with a pill or an electuary—physic stuff. T'other is, we cannot make out how Edith should be no more than ten years old. By'r Lady, we had taken her to be some sixteen or upwards. We suppose you have only chosen the round number for the metre. Or poem and dedication may be both older than they pretend to; but then some hint might have been given—for as it stands, it may only serve some day to puzzle the parish reckoning. But without inquiring further, (for 'tis ungracious to look into a lady's years,) the dedication is eminently pleasing and tender, and we wish Edith May Southey joy of it. Something, too, struck us as if we had heard of the death

of John May. A John May's death was a few years since in the papers.

We think the tale one of the quietest, prettiest things we have seen. You have been temperate in the use of Localities, which generally spoil poems laid in exotic regions. You mostly cannot stir out (in such things) for humming-birds and fireflies. A tree is a Magnolia, &c.—Can I but like the truly Catholic spirit? "Blame as thou mayest the Papist's erring creed"—which, and other passages, brought me back to the old Anthology days, and the admonitory lesson to "Dear George" on *The Vesper Bell*, a little poem which retains its first hold upon me strangely.

The Compliment to the translatress is daintily conceived. Nothing is choicer in that sort of writing than to bring in some remote, impossible parallel,—as between a great empress and the inobtrusive quiet soul who digged her noiseless way so perseveringly thro' that rugged Paraguay mine. How she Dobrizhoffered it all out, it puzzles my slender Latinity to conjecture. Why do you seem to sanction Landor's unfeeling allegorizing away of honest Quixote! He may as well say Strap is meant to symbolize the Scottish nation before the Union, and Random since that act of dubious issue; or that Partridge means the Mystical Man, and Lady Bellaston typifies the Woman upon Many Waters. Gebir, indeed, may mean the state of the hop markets last month, for any thing I know to the contrary. That all Spain overflowed with romancical books (as Madge Newcastle calls them) was no reason that Cervantes should not smile at the matter of them; nor even a reason that, in another mood, he might not multiply them, deeply as he was tinctured with the essence of them. Quixote is the father of gentle ridicule, and at the same time the very depository and treasury of chivalry and highest notions. Marry,

when somebody persuaded Cervantes that he meant only fun, and put him upon writing that unfortunate Second Part with the confederacies of that unworthy Duke and most contemptible Duchess, Cervantes sacrificed his instinct to his understanding.

We got your little book but last night, being at Enfield, to which place we came about a month since, and are having quiet holydays. Mary walks her twelve miles a day some days, and I my twenty on others. 'Tis all holyday with me now, you know. The change works admirably.

For literary news, in my poor way, I have a one-act farce going to be acted at the Haymarket; but when? is the question. 'Tis an extravaganza, and like enough to follow *Mr H.* The *London Magazine* has shifted its publishers once more, and I shall shift myself out of it. It is fallen. My ambition is not at present higher than to write nonsense for the play-houses, to eke out a somewhat contracted income. *Tempus erat.* There was a time, my dear Cornwallis, when the Muse, &c. But I am now in Mac Fleckno's predicament,—

"Promised a play, and dwindled to a farce."

Coleridge is better (was, at least, a few weeks since) than he has been for years. His accomplishing his book at last has been a source of vigour to him. We are on a half visit to his friend Allsop, at a Mrs Leishman's, Enfield, but expect to be at Colebrook Cottage in a week or so, where, or anywhere, I shall be always most happy to receive tidings from you. G. Dyer is in the height of an uxorious paradise. His honeymoon will not wane till he wax cold. Never was a more happy pair since Acme and Septimius, and longer. Farewell, with many thanks, dear S. Our loves to all round your Wrekin.

Your old friend,

C. Lamb.

CCCLXIII. TO WILLIAM HONE

[10th August, 1825.]

Dear H.,—Will you direct these from Miss Hazlitt to Mr Thelwall, whose address I know not?

I have returned the Shakspeare *errata*, finding much nonsense; good principles of correction, but sad wildness in the application of them. No magazine, as magazines go, would pay for the inclosed. Thelwall may take them for friendship's sake.

Yours, as before.

C. LAMB.

Mr Hone,
45, *Ludgate Hill.*

CCCLXIV. TO THE SAME

[August 12, 1825.]

Dear Hone,—Your books are right acceptable. I did not write farther about Dogget, because on second thoughts the book I mean does not refer to him. A coach from the "Bell," or "Bell and Crown," sets off to Enfield at half-past four. Put yourself in it *to-morrow* afternoon and come to us; take a bed at an inn, and waste all Sunday with us. We desire to show you the country here. If we are out when you come, the maid is instructed to keep you upon tea and proper bread and butter till we come home. Pray secure me the last number of the *Every Day Book*, that which has S. R[ay] in it, which by mistake *has never come*. Did our newsman not bring it on Monday? Don't send home for it, for if I get it hereafter, (so I have it at last,) it is all I want. Mind, we shall expect you Saturday night or Sunday morning. There are Edmonton coaches from Bishopsgate every half hour. The walk thence to Enfield is easy, across the fields; a mile and a half.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

This invitation is "ingenuous." I assure you we want to see you here. Or will Sunday night and all day Monday suit you better? The coach sets you down at Mr Leishman's.

Friday.

Mr Hone,

Colebrook Cottage, Islington.

CCCLXV. TO THE SAME

[August, 1825.]

Dear Hone,—I sent you a note by post to day, but this comes sooner by a friend. Put yourself in the coach ("Bell," Holborn) to-morrow (Saturday) afternoon, half-past four. Come and take a bed at an inn, and waste Sunday with us gloriously. We have dainty spots to show you. If you can't come, come Sunday and stay Monday. Coaches to Edmonton go hourly from Bishopgate, but we shall hope for you on Saturday (to-morrow) evening.

C. Lamb.

Friday,

Mrs Leishman's, The Chase,

Enfield.

Pray send the inclosed, and burn what comes inclosed in the *post* letter. Put *last* week's *Every Day* in your pocket, which we have missed; that which has S. R[ay].

Mr Hone,

Colebrook Cottage.

CCCLXVI. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Thursday.

My Dear Allsop,—Mrs Leishman gives us hopes of seeing you all on Sunday. We shall provide a bit of beef or something on that day, so you need not market. We are very comfortable here. Our kindest remembrances to Mrs Allsop and the chits. We lying-in people go out on Saturday, Mrs L. bids me say, and that you may come that evening and find beds, &c.

Yours truly,

C. Lamb.

CCCLXVII. TO THE SAME

Islington, 9 Sep.

My dear Allsop,—We are exceedingly grieved for your loss. When your note came, my sister went to Pall Mall, to find you, and saw Mrs L., and was a little comfited to find Mrs A. had returned to Enfield before the distressful event. I am very feeble. Can scarce move a pen; got home from Enfield on the Friday. And on Monday following was laid up with a most violent nervous fever—second this summer; have had Leeches to my Temples; have not had, nor can get, a night's sleep. So you will excuse more from

Yours truly,

C. Lamb.

Our most kind remembrances to poor Mrs Allsop. A line to say how you both are will be most acceptable.

CCCLXVIII. TO THE SAME

Saturday, Sep. 1825.

My dear Allsop,—Come not near this unfortunate roof yet a while. My disease is clearly but slowly going. Field is an excellent attendant. But Mary's

anxieties have overturned her. She has her old Miss James with her, without whom I should not feel a support in the world. We keep in separate apartments, and must weather it. Let me know all of your healths. Kindest love to Mrs Allsopp.

C. Lamb.

Can you call at Mrs Burney, 26, James Street, and tell her, and that I can see no one here in this state. If Martin return, if well enough, I will meet him some where; don't let him come.

CCCLXIX. TO THE SAME

Dear Allsop,—My injunctions about not calling here had solely reference to your being unwell, &c. at home. I am most glad to see you on my own account. I dine at 3 on either Sunday; come then, or earlier or later; only before dinner I generally walk. Your dining here will be quite convenient. I of course have a Joint that day. I owe you for Newspapers, Cobbetts, pheasants, what not?

Yours Most Obliged,

C. L.

P.S. I am so well (except Rheumatism, which forbids my being out on evenings) that I forgot to mention my health in the above. Mary is very poorly yet. Love to Mrs Allsop.

CCCLXX. TO WILLIAM HONE

30 Sept. [1825].

Dear H.,—I came home in a week from Enfield, worse than I went. My sufferings have been intense, but are abating. I begin to know what a little sleep is. My sister has sunk under her anxieties about me.

She is laid up, deprived of reason for many weeks to come, I fear. She is in the same house, but we do not meet. It makes both worse. I can just hobble down as far as the "Angel" once a day; further kills me. When I can stretch to Copenh[agen] Street I will. If you come this way any morning I can only just shake you by the hand. This gloomy house does not admit of making my friends welcome. You have come off triumphant with Bartholomew Fair. Yours, (writ with difficulty,)

C. LAMB.

Mr Hone,
Ludgate Hill.

CCCLXXI. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Tuesday, Oct. 1825.

Dear Ayrton,

I am not nor can be forgetful of you. All this Summer almost I have been ill. I have been laid up (the second nervous attack) now six weeks. I have only known what sleep is, and that imperfect, for a week past. I have a medical attendant on me daily, and am brought low, though recovering. In the midst of my sufferings Mary was overcome with anxiety and nursing, and is ill of her old complaint which will last for many weeks to come, she is with me in the house. I have neither place at present to receive old friends, but for a minute's chat or so, nor strength for some time I fear to stretch to them. Mr Burney, who is come home, will corroborate this. But I hope again to see you, and Mrs A. for whose restoration I heartily pray. No longer reproach me, who never was but yours truly C. LAMB.

CCCLXXII. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Oct. 5, 1825.

Dear A.,—Have received your drafts. We will

talk that over Sunday morning. I am strongish, but have not good nights, and cannot settle my inside.

Farewell till Sunday.

I have no possible use for the 1st draft, so shall keep them as above.

Yours truly,

C. L.

I only trouble you now because, if the drafts had miscarried, any one might have cash'd 'em. Remember at home.

Ludlow is charming.

CCCLXXIII. TO WILLIAM HONE

(Postmarked) Oc. 18, 1825.

Dear H.—The first bit of writing I have done these many weeks—The quotations from both the Colliers are correct, I assure you.

C. LAMB, getting well,
but weak.

CCCLXXIV. TO THE SAME

(? Fragment)

Oct. 24, 1825.

Who is your compositor? I cannot praise enough the beauty and accuracy of the Garrick play Types. That of Zelidaura, &c., 2 or 3 numbers back was really a poser. He must be no ordinary person who got through it (so quaint) without a slip. Not one in a 1000 would have done it. . . . Moxon is a little fretful that you have extracted a bit (only) from his friend Coles' book about Harvey and Weston Favell. C. is gaping for it, and has sent M. a very curious old man's will for your book, which M. only keeps till you gratify him by a timely notice. Any thing about the meditation among your Tombs? A digressive

P.S. of the great house of Longman, Shortman and Co. . . . I send you a trifle. You have seen my lines, I suppose, in the "London"? I cannot tell you how much I like St Chad's Well.—P.S.—Why did you not stay or come again yesterday? Call you that friendship? Mercy! what a dose you have sent me of Burney! A perfect opening * draught!

* A pun is here intended.—C. L.

CCCLXXV. TO THE SAME

Oct. 25th, 1825.

I send the scrap,—is it worth postage? My friends are fairly surprised that you should set me down so unequivocally for an ass, as you have done. (P. 10—58.)

"Here he is,
What follows
The Ass."

CCCLXXVI. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[Saturday, December 3, 1825.]

Dear A.,—You will be glad to hear we are at home to Visitors; not too many or noisy. Some fine day shortly Mary will surprise Mrs Allsop. The weather is not seasonable for formal engagements.

Yours most ever,

C. Lamb.

CCCLXXVII. TO CHARLES OLLIER

Dear O.,—I leave *it entirely to Mr Colburn*; but if not too late, I think the Proverbs had better have L signed to them, and reserve *Elia* for Essays *more*

Eliacal. May I trouble you to send my Magazines, not to Norris, but H. C. Robinson, Esq., King's Bench Walk, instead.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

My friend Hood, a prime genius and hearty fellow, brings this.

Mr Ollier.

CCCLXXVIII. TO THE SAME

Colebrook Cottage,
Colebrook Row,
Tuesday

Dear Ollier,—I send you two more proverbs, which will be the last of this batch, unless I send you one more by the post on THURSDAY; none will come after that day; so do not leave any open room in that case. Hood sups with me to-night. Can you come and eat grouse? 'Tis not often I offer at delicacies.

Yours most kindly,

C. LAMB.

CCCLXXIX. TO THE SAME

Dear O.,—We lamented your absence last night. The grouse were piquant: the bucks incomparable. You must come in to cold mutton and oysters some evening. Name your evening; though I have qualms at the distance. Do you never leave early? My head is very queerish, and indisposed for much company; but we will get Hood, that half Hogarth, to meet you. The scrap I send should come in AFTER the "Rising with the Lark."

Yours truly,

Colburn, I take it, pays postages.

CCCLXXX. TO THE SAME

January 1826.

Dear O.,—I send you eight more jests, with the terms which my friend asks, which you will be so kind as to get an answer to from Mr Colburn, that I may tell him whether to go on with them. You will see his short note to me at the end, and tear it off. It is not for me to judge, but, considering the scarceness of the materials, what he asks is, I think, mighty reasonable. *Do not let him be even known as a friend of mine.* You see what he says about five going in first as a taste, but these will make thirteen in all. Tell me by what time he need send more; I suppose not for some time (if you do not bring them out this month).

Keep a place for me till the middle of the month, for I cannot hit on anything yet. I mean nothing by my crotchets but extreme difficulty in writing. But I will go on as long as I can. C. LAMB.

CCCLXXXI. TO MR HUDSON

Colebrooke Row, Islington,
1st Feb., 1826.

Sir,—I was requested by Mr Godwin to enquire about a nurse that you want for a lady who requires constraint. The one I know does not go out now; but at Whitmore House, Mr Warburton's, Hoxton, (to which she belongs), I dare say you may be very properly provided. The terms are eight-and-twenty shillings a week, with her board; she finding her beer and washing: which is less expensive than for a female patient to be taken into a house of that description with any tolerable accommodation.

I am, Sir,
Your humble Servant,
C. LAMB.

[Indorsed:]
Mr Hudson, Legacy Office, Somerset House.

CCCLXXXII. TO C. OLLIER

[Feb. 4, 1826.]

Dear O.—I send a proverb, and a common saying, which is all I shall have against next month. What may I say of *terms* to my Chinese friend? He will be on the fret, thinking he has ask'd more than Mr C. will give, and he won't know whether to go on translating. Be explicit. Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Don't lose these: I keep no copies

Remember I don't want to palm a friend upon the Mag.

I am quite content with my single reception in it.

CCCLXXXIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

Feb. 7th, 1826.

Dear B. B.,—I got your book not more than five days ago, so am not so negligent as I must have appeared to you with a fortnight's sin upon my shoulders. I tell you with sincerity that I think you have completely succeeded in what you intended to do. What is poetry may be disputed. These are poetry to me at least. They are concise, pithy, and moving. Uniform as they are, and untristorify'd, I read them thro' at two sittings, without one sensation approaching to tedium. I do not know that among your many kind presents of this nature, this is not my favourite Volume. The language is never lax, and there is a unity of design and feeling, you wrote them *with love* —to avoid the cox*combical* phrase, *con amore*. I am particularly pleased with the Spiritual Law, pages 34-5. It reminded me of Quarles and Holy Mr Herbert as Izaak Walton calls him; the two best, if not only, of our devotional poets, tho' some prefer Watts, and some *Tom Moore*.

I am far from well, or in my right spirits, and shudder at pen-and-ink work. I poke out a monthly

crudity for Colburn in his magazine, which I call Popular Fallacies, and periodically crush a proverb or two, setting up my folly against the wisdom of nations Do you see the New Monthly?

One word I must object to in your little book, and it recurs more than once—*fadeless* is no genuine compound; *loveless* is, because love is a noun as well as verb, but what is a fade? And I do not quite like whipping the Greek drama upon the back of Genesis, page 8. I do not like praise handed in by disparagement: as I objected to a side censure on Byron, &c. in the lines on Bloomfield: with these poor cavils excepted, your verses are without a flaw.

C. Lamb.

CCCLXXXIV. TO THE SAME

March 20th, 1826.

Dear B. B.,—You may know my letters by the paper and the folding. For the former, I live on scraps obtained in charity from an old friend whose stationery is a permanent perquisite; for folding I shall do it neatly when I learn to tie my neck-cloths. I surprise most of my friends by writing to them on ruled paper, as if I had not got past pot-hooks and hangers. Sealing-wax I have none on my establishment, wafers of the coarsest bran supply its place. When my Epistles come to be weighed with Pliny's, however superior to the Roman in delicate irony, judicious reflections, &c., his gilt post will bribe over the judges to him. All the time I was at the E. I. H. I never mended a pen, I now cut 'em to the stumps, marring rather than mending the primitive goose-quill. I cannot bear to pay for articles I used to get for nothing. When Adam laid out his first penny upon nonpareils at some stall in Mesopotamos, I think it went hard with him, reflecting upon his old goodly orchard, where he had so many for nothing. When

I write to a Great man at the Court end, he opens with surprise upon a naked note, such as Whitechapel people interchange, with no sweet degrees of envelope. I never enclosed one bit of paper in another, nor understood the rationale of it. Once only I sealed with borrowed wax, to set Walter Scott a wondering, sign'd with the imperial quartered arms of England, which my friend Field gives in compliment to his descent in the female line from O. Cromwell. It must have set his antiquarian curiosity upon watering. To your questions upon the currency, I refer you to Mr Robinson's last speech, where, if you can find a solution, I can not. I think this tho' the best ministry we ever stumbled upon. Gin reduced four shillings in the gallon, wine 2 shillings in the quart. This comes home to men's minds and bosoms. My tirade against visitors was not meant *particularly* at you or A. K. I scarce know what I meant, for I do not just now feel the grievance. I wanted to make an *article*. So in another thing I talked of somebody's *insipid wife*, without a corresponding object in my head: and a good lady, a friend's wife, whom I really *love*, (don't startle, I mean in a licit way,) has looked shyly on me ever since. The blunders of personal application are ludicrous. I send out a character every now and then on purpose to exercise the ingenuity of my friends. Popular Fallacies will go on; that word concluded is an erratum, I suppose for continued. I do not know how it got stuff'd in there. A little thing without name will also be printed on the Religion of the Actors, but it is out of your way, so I recommend you, with true author's hypocrisy, to skip it. We are about to sit down to Roast beef, at which we could wish A. K., B. B., and B. B.'s pleasant daughter to be humble partakers. So much for my hint at visitors, which was scarcely calculated for droppers-in from Woodbridge. The sky does not drop such larks every day.

My very kindest wishes to you all three, with my sister's best love.

C. Lamb.

CCCLXXXV. TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

March 22, 1826.

Dear Coleridge,—We will with great pleasure be with you on Thursday in the next week early. May we venture to bring Emma with us? Your finding out my style in your nephew's pleasant book is surprising to me. I want eyes to descry it. You are a little too hard upon his morality, though I confess he has more of Sterne about him than of Sternhold. But he saddens into excellent sense before the conclusion. Your query shall be submitted to Miss Kelly, though it is obvious that the pantomime, when done, will be more easy to decide upon than in proposal. I say, do it by all means. I have Decker's play by me, if you can filch anything out of it. Miss Gray, with her kitten eyes, is an actress, though she shows it not at all; and pupil to the former, whose gestures she mimics in comedy to the disparagement of her own natural manner, which is agreeable. It is funny to see her bridling up her neck, which is native to F. K.; but there is no setting the manners of others upon one's shoulders any more than their head. I am glad you esteem Manning, though you see but his husk or shrine. He discloses not, save to select worshippers, and will leave the world without any one hardly but me knowing how stupendous a creature he is. I am perfecting myself in the "Ode to Eton College" against Thursday, that I may not appear unclassic. I have just discovered that it is much better than the "Elegy."

In haste, C. L.

P.S.—I do not know what to say to your *latest* theory about Nero being the Messiah, though by all accounts he was a 'nointed one.

CCCLXXXVI. TO THE SAME

[Tuesday, March 28, 1826]

My dear Coleridge,—With pain and grief I must *entreat* you to excuse us on Thursday. My head, though externally correct, has had a severe concussion in my long illness, and the very idea of an engagement hanging over for a day or two, forbids my rest, and I get up miserable. I am not well enough for company. I do assure you, no other thing prevents my coming. I expect Field or his brothers this or tomorrow evening, and it worrys me to death that I am not ostensibly ill enough to put them off. I will get better, when I will hope to see your nephew. He will come again. Mary joins in best love to the Gilmans. Do, I earnestly entreat you, excuse me. I assure you again that I am not fit to go out yet.

Yours (tho' shattered),

C. LAMB.

To Mr Gilman's,
Highgate.

CCCLXXXVII. TO REV. HENRY F. CARY

April 3, 1826.

Dear Sir,—It is whispered me that you will not be unwilling to look into our doleful hermitage. Without more preface, you will gladden our cell by accompanying our old chums of the *London*, Darley and A[llan] C[unningham], to Enfield on Wednesday. You shall have hermit's fare, with talk as seraphical as the novelty of the divine life will permit, with an innocent retrospect to the world which we have left, when I will thank you for your hospitable offer at Chiswick, and with plain hermit reasons evince the necessity of abiding here.

Without hearing from you, then, you shall give us leave to expect you. I have long had it on my conscience to invite you, but spirits have been low; and

I am indebted to chance for this awkward but most sincere invitation.

Yours, with best loves to Mrs Cary,

C. LAMB.

D. knows all about the coaches. Oh for a Museum in the wilderness!

CCCLXXXVIII. TO CHARLES OLLIER

[April, 1826.]

Dear O., — will you let the fair Bearer have a magazine for me for this month (April)—and can you let me have for my Chinese friend one of last month (March) and of this (in case only that something of his is inserted). Is such a privilege conceded to occasional contributors of having the numbers they appear in?—I do not want it, if not usual. . . . and send a line if he may go on with the jests.

Yours C. LAMB.

Write, if but a line.

1 Mag for me, Apr.
1 for Chinaman, March
1 Do. (if jests are in) Apr.

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3 books or at
least 1 for me.
If you are out, I'll call to-morrow.

CCCLXXXIX. TO VINCENT NOVELLO

May 9, 1826.

Dear N.,—You will not expect us to-morrow, I am sure, while these damn'd North-Easters continue. We must wait the Zephyrs' pleasures. By the bye,

I was at Highgate on Wednesday, the only one of the party.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Summer, as my friend Coleridge waggishly writes, has set in with its usual severity.

Kind remembces. to Mrs Novello, &c.

CCCXC. TO BERNARD BARTON

May 16th, 1826.

Dear B. B.,—I have had no spirits lately to begin a letter to you, though I am under obligations to you (how many!) for your neat little poem. 'Tis just what it professes to be, a simple tribute, in chaste verse, serious and sincere. I do not know how friends will relish it, but we outlyers, Honorary Friends, like it very well. I have had my head and ears stuff'd up with the East winds. A continual ringing in my brain of bells jangled, or The Spheres touch'd by some raw angel. It is not George 3 trying the 100 psalm? I get my music for nothing But the weather seems to be softening, and will thaw my stunnings. Coleridge writing to me a week or two since, begins his note—"Summer has set in with its usual severity." A cold Summer is all I know of disagreeable in cold. I do not mind the utmost rigour of real Winter, but these smiling hypocrites of Mays wither me to death. My head has been a ringing Chaos, like the day the winds were made, before they submitted to the discipline of a weathercock, before the quarters were made. In the street, with the blended noises of life about me, I hear, and my head is lightened, but in a room the hubbub comes back, and I am deaf as a Sinner. Did I tell you of a pleasant sketch Hood has done, which he calls *Very Deaf Indeed.* It is of a good-natur'd stupid-looking old gentleman, whom a footpad has stopt, but

for his extreme deafness cannot make him understand what he wants; the unconscious old gentleman is extending his ear-trumpet very complacently, and the fellow is firing a pistol into it to make him hear, but the ball will pierce his skull sooner than the report will reach his sensorium. I choose a very little bit of paper, for my ear hisses when I bend down to write. I can hardly read a book, for I miss that small soft voice which the idea of articulated words raises (almost imperceptibly to you) in a silent reader. I seem too deaf to see what I read. But with a touch or two of returning Zephyr my head will melt. What lies you poets tell about the May. It is the most ungenial part of the Year, cold crocuses, cold primroses, you take your blossoms in Ice, a painted Sun—

> Unmeaning joy around appears,
> And Nature smiles as if she sneers.

It is ill with me when I begin to look which way the wind sets. Ten years ago, I literally did not know the point from the broad end of the Vane, which it was that indicated the Quarter. I hope these ill winds have blowd *over* you as they do thro' me.

Kindest remembrances to you and yours. C. L.

CCCXCI. TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

June 1st, 1826.

Dear Coleridge,—If I know myself, nobody more detests the display of personal vanity, which is implied in the act of sitting for one's picture, than myself. But the fact is, that the likeness which accompanies this letter was stolen from my person at one of my unguarded moments by some too partial artist, and my friends are pleased to think that he has not much flattered me. Whatever its merits may be, you, who have so great an interest in the original will have a satisfaction in tracing the features of one

that has so long esteemed you. There are times when in a friend's absence these graphic representations of him almost seem to bring back the man himself. The painter, whoever he was, seems to have taken me in one of those disengaged moments, if I may so term them, when the native character is so much more honestly displayed than can be possible in the restraints of an enforced sitting attitude. Perhaps it rather describes me as a thinking man, than a man in the act of thought. Whatever its pretensions, I know it will be dear to you, towards whom I should wish my thoughts to flow in a sort of an undress rather than in the more studied graces of diction.

I am, dear Coleridge, yours sincerely,

C. LAMB.

CCCXCII. TO AN EDITOR OR PUBLISHER

June 14 [? 1826].

Dear Sir,—I am quite ashamed, after your kind letter, of having expressed any disappointment about my remuneration. It is quite equivalent to the value of anything I have yet sent you. I had Twenty Guineas a sheet from the London, and what I did for them was more worth that sum than anything, I am afraid, I can now produce, would be worth the lesser sum. I used up all my best thoughts in that publication, and I do not like to go on writing worse and worse, and feeling that I do so. I want to try something else. However, if any subject turns up, which I think will do your Magazine no discredit, you shall have it at your price, or something between that and my old price. I prefer writing to seeing you just now, for after such a letter as I have received from you, in truth I am ashamed to see you. We will never mention the thing again.

Your obliged friend and Servant.

C. LAMB.

CCCXCIII. TO J. B. DIBDIN

Friday, some day of June, 1826.

Dear D.,—My first impulse upon opening your letter was pleasure in seeing your old neat hand, nine parts gentlemanly, with a modest dash of the clerical: my second a Thought, natural enough this hot weather—am I to answer all this? Why 'tis as as long as those to the Ephesians and Galatians put together, I have counted the words for curiosity. But then Paul has nothing like the fun which is ebullient all over yours. I don't remember a good thing (good like yours) from the 1st Romans to the last of the Hebrews. I remember but one Pun in all the Evangely and that was made by his and our Master: Thou art Peter (that is Doctor Rock), and upon this Rock will I build etc., which sanctifies Punning with me against all gainsayers. I never knew an enemy to puns who was not an ill-natured man. Your fair critic in the coach reminds me of a Scotchman who assured me that he did not see much in Shakspeare. I replied, I daresay *not*. He felt the equivoke, look'd awkward and reddish, but soon return'd to the attack by saying that he thought Burns was as good as Shakspeare: I said that I had no doubt he was—to a *Scotchman*. We exchanged no more words that day. Your account of the fierce faces in the Hanging, with the presumed interlocution of the Eagle and the Tyger, amused us greatly. You cannot be so very bad while you can pick mirth off from rotten walls. May the Lord in the Fourth Person who clapt invisible wet blankets about the shoulders of Shadrack Meschek and Abednego, be with you in the Fiery Trial. But get out of the frying pan. Your business, I take it, is bathing, not baking.

Let me hear that you have clambered up to Lover's Seat; it is as fine in that neighbourhood as Juan Fernandez, as lonely, too, when the Fishing-boats are

not out; I have sat for hours, staring upon a shipless sea. The salt sea is never so grand as when it is left to itself. One cock-boat spoils it. A sea-mew or two improves it. And go to the little church, which is a very Protestant Loretto, and seems dropt by some angel for the use of a hermit, who was at once parishioner and a whole parish. It is not too big. Go in the night, bring it away in your portmanteau, and I will plant it in my garden. It must have been erected in the very infancy of British Christianity, for the two or three first converts; yet with it all the appertances of a church of the first magnitude, its pulpit, its pews, its baptismal font; a cathedral in a nut-shell. Seven people would crowd it like a Caledonian Chapel. The minister that divides the Word there, must give lumping penny-worths. It is built to the text of "two or three assembled in my name." It reminds me of the grain of mustard seed. If the glebe-land is proportionate, it may yield two potatoes. Tithes out of it could be no more split than a hair. Its First fruits must be its Last, for 'twould never produce a couple. It is truly the strait and narrow way, and few there be (of London visitants) that find it. The still small voice is surely to be found there, if anywhere. A sounding-board is merely there for ceremony. It is secure from earthquakes, not more from sanctity than size, for 'twould feel a mountain thrown upon it no more than a taper-worm would. *Go and see, but not without your spectacles.* By the way, there's a capital farm-house two-thirds of the way to the Lover's Seat, with incomparable plum cake, ginger-beer, etc. Mary bids me warn you not to read the *Anatomy of Melancholy* in your present *low way.* You'll fancy yourself a pipkin, or a headless bear, as Burton speaks of. You'll be lost in a maze of remedies for a labyrinth of diseasements, a plethora of cures. Read Fletcher; above all, the *Spanish Curate*, the *Thief, or Little Night Walker*, the *Wit Without Money*, and the

Lover's Pilgrimage. Laugh, and come home fat. Neither do we think Sir T. Browne quite the thing for you just at present. Fletcher is as light as soda-water, Browne and Burton are two strong potions for an Invalid. And don't thumb or dirt the books. Take care of the bindings. Lay a leaf of silver paper under 'em as you read them. And don't smoke tobacco over 'em, the leaves will fall in and burn or dirty their namesakes. If you find any dusty atoms of the Indian weed crumbled up in the Beaumont and Fletcher, they are *mine*. But then, you know, so is the Folio also. A pipe and a comedy of Fletcher's the last thing of a night is the best recipe for light dreams and to scatter away Nightmares. *Probatum est.* But do as you like about the former. Only cut the Baker's. You will come home else all crust; Rankings must chip you, before you can appear in his counting-house. And, my dear Peter Fin Junr., do contrive to see the sea at least once before you return. You'll be asked about it in the Old Jewry. It will appear singular not to have seen it. And rub up your Muse, the family Muse, and send us a rhyme or so. Don't waste your wit upon that damned Dry Salter. I never knew but one Dry Salter who could relish those mellow effusions, and he broke. You know Tommy Hill, the wittiest of dry salters. Dry Salters, what a word for this thirsty weather! I must drink after it. Here's to thee, my dear Dibdin, and to our having you again snug and well at Colebrooke. But our nearest hopes are to hear again from you shortly. An epistle only a quarter as agreeable as your last would be a treat.

Yours most truly,

C. Lamb.

Timothy B. Dibdin, Esq.,
No. 9, Blucher Row,
Priory, Hastings.

CCCXCIV. TO THE SAME

July 14, 1826.

Because you boast poetic Grandsire,
And Rhyming kin, both Uncle and Sire,
Dost think that none but *their* Descendings
Can tickle folks with double endings?
I had a Dad, that would for half a bet
Have put down thine thro' half the alphabet.
Thou, who would be Dan Prior the Second,
For Dan Posterior must be reckon'd.
In faith, dear Tim, your rhymes are slovenly,
As a man may say, dough-baked and ovenly;
Tedious and long as two long Acres,
And smell most vilely of the Baker's.
(I have been cursing every limb o' thee,
Because I could not hitch in *Timothy*.
Jack, Will, Tom, Dick's a serious evil,
But Tim—plain Tim's—the very devil).
Thou most incorrigible scribbler,
Right Watering place and cockney dribbler,
What *child*, that barely understands *A*
B C, would ever dream that Stanza
Would tinkle into chime with "Plan, Sir?"
Go, go, you are not worth an answer.

I had a Sire, that at plain Crambo
Had hit you o'er the pate a damn'd blow.
How now? may I die game, and you die brass,
But I had stol'n a quip from Hudibras.
'Twas thinking on that fine old Suttler,
That was in faith a second Butler;
Had as queer rhymes as he, and subtler.
He would have put you to't this weather
For rattling syllables together.
Rhym'd ye to death, like "rats in Ireland,"
Except that he was born in High'r Land.
His chimes, not crampt like thine, and rung ill,
Had made Job split his sides on dunghill.

There was no limit to his merryings
At christ'nings, weddings, nay at buryings.
No undertaker would live near him,
Those grave practitioners did fear him;
Mutes, at his merry mops, turned "vocal,"
And fellows, hired for silence, "spoke all."
No *body* could be laid in cavity
Long as he lived, with proper gravity.
His mirth-fraught eye had but to glitter,
And every mourner round must titter.
The Parson, prating of Mount Hermon,
Stood still to laugh, in midst of sermon.
The final Sexton (smile he *must* for him)
Could hardly get to "dust to dust" for him.
He lost three pall-bearers their livelihood,
Only with simp'ring at his lively mood.
Provided that they fresh and neat came,
All jests were fish that to his net came.
He'd banter Apostolic castings,
As you jeer fishermen at Hastings.
When the fly bit, *like me*, he leapt o'er all,
And stood not much on what was Scriptural.

P.S. I had forgot, at Small Bohemia
(Enquire the way of your maid Euphemia)
Are sojourning, of all good fellows,
The prince and princess—the *Novellos*.
Pray seek 'em out, and give my love to 'em;
You'll find you'll soon be hand and glove to 'em.

C. L.

In prose, Little Bohemia, about a mile from Hastings in the Hollington Road, when you can get so far. This letter will introduce you, if 'tis agreeable. Take a donkey. 'Tis Novello the Composer and his wife, our very good friends. Dear Dib, I find relief in a word or two of prose. In truth my rhymes come slow. You have "routh of 'em." It gives us

pleasure to find you keep your good spirits. Your letter did us good. Pray Heaven you are got out at last. Write quickly.

For Tom Dibdin,
At No. 4 Meadow Cottages,
Hastings.

CCCXCV. TO BERNARD BARTON

[No date.]

Dear B. B.,

If you have a convenient conveyance, pray transmit this to your friend Mr Mitford. I have a prelibation of his china for him. It is coming home by the James Scott from Sincapore, which I cannot learn is yet arrived. I copy my friend's letter dated Canton December: he himself I find is in England, having *prevented* his own Letter.

		Dollars			
12 flower stands	. .	10½			
42 ,, pots	. .	4½			
10 cases	. . .	8½			
Chinese duties	. .	3½			
Cost in China	.	27 dollars at 4/6	£6	1	6
Freight—Tons	feet				
1	21½ at £16 per ton	. .	22	14	4
			28	15	10

There will be duties *here* to pay, I do not know what. My friend says he is afraid Mr M. will think them expensive. The articles themselves, he will see, at prime cost, are little or nothing, but the freight is most heavy, and would have been half as much more by a Company's ship. I shall keep my eye upon the arrival of the James Scott, and take measures accordingly.

Yours truly,

Chs Lamb.

I want a particular direction to Mr M., that the Jars, when they come, may be duly sent.

CCCXCVI. TO J. B. DIBDIN

Saturday, September 9, 1826.

An answer is requested.

Dear D.,—I have observed that a Letter is never more acceptable than when received upon a rainy day, especially a rainy Sunday; which moves me to send you somewhat, however short. This will find you sitting after Breakfast, which you will have prolonged as far as you can with consistency to the poor handmaid that has the reversion of the Tea Leaves; making two nibbles of your last morsel of *stale* roll (you cannot have hot new ones on the Sabbath), and reluctantly coming to an end, because when that is done, what can you do till dinner? You cannot go to the Beach, for the rain is drowning the sea, turning rank Thetis fresh, taking the brine out of Neptune's pickles, while mermaids sit upon rocks with umbrellas, their ivory combs sheathed for spoiling in the wet of waters foreign to them. You cannot go to the library, for it's shut. You are not religious enough to go to church. O it is worth while to cultivate piety to the gods, to have something to fill up the heart on a wet Sunday! You cannot cast accounts, for your ledger is being eaten with moths in the Ancient Jewry. You cannot play at draughts, for there is none to play with you, and besides there is not a draught-board in the house. You cannot go to market, for it closed last night. You cannot look into the shops, their backs are shut upon you. You cannot read the Bible, for it is not good reading for the sick and the hypochondriacal. You cannot while away an hour with a friend, for you have no friend round that Wrekin. You cannot divert yourself with a stray acquaintance, for you have picked none up. You cannot bear the chiming of Bells, for they invite you to a banquet where you are no visitant. You cannot cheer yourself with the prospect of to-morrow's letter, for none

come on Mondays. You cannot count those endless vials on the mantlepiece with any hope of making a variation in their numbers. You have counted your spiders: your Bastile is exhausted. You sit and deliberately curse your hard exile from all familiar sights and sounds. Old Ranking poking in his head unexpectedly would just now be as good to you as Grimaldi. Anything to deliver you from this intolerable weight of Ennui. You are too ill to shake it off: not ill enough to submit to it, and to lie down as a lamb under it. The Tyranny of sickness is nothing to the Cruelty of Convalescence: 'tis to have Thirty Tyrants for one. That pattering rain drops on your brain. You'll be worse after dinner, for you must dine at one to-day, that Betty may go to afternoon service. She insists upon having her chopped hay. And then when she goes out, who *was* something to you, something to speak to—what an interminable afternoon you'll have to go thro'. You can't break yourself from your locality: you cannot say "to-morrow I set off for Banstead, by God": for you are booked for Wednesday. Forseeing this, I thought a *cheerful letter* would come in opportunely. If any of the little topics for mirth I have thought upon should serve you in this utter extinguishment of sunshine, to make you a little merry, I shall have had my ends. I love to make things comfortable. . . . This, which is scratched out was the most material thing I had to say, but on maturer thoughts I defer it.

P.S.—We are just sitting down to dinner with a pleasant party, Coleridge, Reynolds the dramatist, and Sam Bloxam: to-morrow (that is *to-day*), Liston, and Wyat of the Wells, dine with us. May this find you as jolly and freakish as we mean to be. C. Lamb.

Addressed—

T. Dibdin, Esq.,
No. 4, Meadow Cottages,
Hastings.

CCCXCVII. TO BERNARD BARTON

Sept. 26, 1826.

Dear B. B.,—I don't know why I have delay'd so long writing. 'Twas a fault. The under-current of excuse to my mind was that I had heard of the Vessel in which Mitford's jars were to come; that it had been obliged to put into Batavia to refit (which accounts for its delay), but was daily expected. Days are past, and it comes not, and the mermaids may be drinking their Tea out of his China for aught I know; but let's hope not. In the meantime I have paid £28, &c. for the freight and prime cost, which I a little expected he would have settled in London. But do not mention it. I was enabled to do it by a receipt of £30 from Colburn, with whom however I have done. I should else have run short. For I just make ends meet. We will wait the arrival of the Trinkets, and to ascertain their full expense, and then bring in the bill. Don't mention it, for I dare say 'twas mere thoughtlessness. I am sorry you and yours have any plagues about dross matters. I have been sadly puzzled at the defalcation of more than one third of my income, out of which when entire I saved nothing. But cropping off wine, old books, &c. &c., in short, all that can be call'd pocket-money, I hope to be able to go on at the Cottage. Remember, I beg you not to say any thing to Mitford, for if he be honest it will vex him: if not, which I as little expect as that you should be, I have a hank still upon the jars.

Colburn had something of mine in last month, which he has had in hand these seven months, and had lost, or couldn't find room for: I was used to different treatment in the *London*, and have forsworn Periodicals.

I am going thro' a course of reading at the Museum: the Garrick plays, out of part of which I formed my

Specimens. I have Two Thousand to go thro'; and in a few weeks have despatch'd the tythe of 'em. It is a sort of Office to me; hours, ten to four, the same. It does me good. Man must have regular occupation, that has been used to it.

So A. K. keeps a school! she teaches nothing wrong, I'll answer for 't. I have a Dutch print of a School-mistress; little old-fashioned Fleminglings, with only one face among them. She a Princess of a School-mistress, wielding a rod for form more than use; the scene an old monastic chapel, with a Madonna over her head, looking just as serious, as thoughtful, as pure, as gentle as herself. 'Tis a type of thy friend.

Will you pardon my neglect? Mind, again I say, don't show this to M.; let me wait a little longer to know the event of his Luxuries. I am sure he is a good fellow, tho' I made a serious Yorkshire Lad who met him stare when I said he was a Clergyman. He is a pleasant Layman spoiled. Heaven send him his jars uncrack'd, and me my ——

Yours, with kindest wishes to your daughter and friend, in which Mary joins,

C. L.

CCCXCVIII. TO THE SAME

[No date.]

Dear B.B., the *Busy Bee*, as Hood after Dr Watts apostrophizes thee, and well dost thou deserve it for thy labors in the Muses' gardens, wandering over parterres of Think-on-mes and Forget-me-nots, to a total impossibility of forgetting thee,—thy letter was acceptable, thy scruples may be dismissed, thou art *Rectus in Curiâ*, not a word more to be said, *Verbum Sapienti* and so forth, the matter is decided with a white stone, Classically, mark me, and the apparitions vanish'd which haunted me, only the Cramp, Caliban's distemper, clawing me in the calvish part of my

The British Museum, Great Russell Street, in 1829.

nature, makes me ever and anon roar Bullishly, squeak cowardishly, and limp cripple-ishly. Do I write quakerly and simply, 'tis my most Master Mathews's like intention to do it. See Ben Jonson. —I think you told me your acquaintance with the Drama was confin'd to Shakspeare and Miss Baillie: some read only Milton and Croly. The gap is as from an ananas to a Turnip. I have fighting in my head the plots, characters, situations, and sentiments of 400 old Plays (bran new to me) which I have been digesting at the Museum, and my appetite sharpens to twice as many more, which I mean to course over this winter. I can scarce avoid dialogue fashion in this letter. I soliloquize my meditations, and habitually speak dramatic blank verse without meaning it. Do you see Mitford? He will tell you something of my labors. Tell him I am sorry to have missed seeing him, to have talk'd over these old Treasures. I am still more sorry for his missing pots. But I shall be sure of the earliest intelligence of the Lost Tribes. His Sacred Specimens are a thankful addition to my shelves. Marry, I could wish he had been more careful of corrigenda. I have discover'd certain which have slipt his Errata. I put 'em in the next page, as perhaps thou canst transmit them to him; for what purpose but to grieve him, (which yet I should be sorry to do,) but then it shows my learning, and the excuse is complimentary, as it implies their correction in a future Edition. His own things in the book are magnificent, and as an old Christ's Hospitaller I was particularly refresh'd with his eulogy on our Edward. Many of the choice excerpta were new to me. Old Christmas is a coming to the confusion of Puritans, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, Quakers, and that Unwassailing Crew. He cometh not with his wonted gait; he is shrunk nine inches in his girth, but is yet a lusty fellow. Hood's book is mighty clever, and went off 600 copies the first day.

Sion's Songs do not disperse so quickly. The next leaf is for Rev. J. M. In this Adieu, thine briefly in a tall friendship,

C. LAMB.

CCCXCIX. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[? January, 1827.]

Dear Allsop,—Mary will take her chance of an early lunch or dinner with you on Thursday: She can't come on Wednesday. If I can, I will fetch her home. But I am near killed with Christmasing; and, if incompetent, your kindness will excuse me. I can scarce set foot to ground for a cramp that I took me last night.

Yours,

C. LAMB.

CCCC. TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

Colebrooke Row, Islington,
Saturday, 20th Jan. 1827.

Dear Robinson,—I called upon you this morning, and found that you were gone to visit a dying friend. I had been upon a like errand. Poor Norris has been lying dying for now almost a week, such is the penalty we pay for having enjoyed a strong constitution! Whether he knew me or not, I know not; or whether he saw me through his poor glazed eyes; but the group I saw about him I shall not forget. Upon the bed, or about it, were assembled his wife and two daughters, and poor deaf Richard, his son, looking doubly stupified. There they were, and seemed to have been sitting all the week. I could only reach out a hand to Mrs Norris. Speaking was impossible in that mute chamber. By this time I hope it is all over with him. In him I have a loss the world cannot make up. He was my friend and my father's friend all the life I can remember. I seem

to have made foolish friendships ever since. Those are friendships which outlive a second generation. Old as I am waxing, in his eyes I was still the child he first knew me. To the last he called me Charley. I have none to call me Charley now. He was the last link that bound me to the Temple. You are but of yesterday. In him seem to have died the old plainness of manners and singleness of heart. Letters he knew nothing of, nor did his reading extend beyond the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Yet there was a pride of literature about him from being amongst books (he was librarian), and from some scraps of doubtful Latin which he had picked up in his office of entering students, that gave him very diverting airs of pedantry. Can I forget the erudite look with which, when he had been in vain trying to make out a black-letter text of Chaucer in the Temple Library, he laid it down and told me that—"in those old books, Charley, there is sometimes a deal of very indifferent spelling"; and seemed to console himself in the reflection! His jokes, for he had his jokes, are now ended; but they were old trusty perennials, staples that pleased after *decies repetita*, and were always as good as new. One song he had, which was reserved for the night of Christmas Day, which we always spent in the Temple. It was an old thing, and spoke of the flat bottoms of our foes, and the possibility of their coming over in darkness, and alluded to threats of an invasion many years blown over; and when he came to the part—

> "We'll still make 'em run, and we'll still make 'em sweat,
> In spite of the Devil and *Brussels Gazette*,"

his eyes would sparkle as with the freshness of an impending event. And what is the *Brussels Gazette* now? I cry while I enumerate these trifles. "How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear?" His poor good girls will now have to receive their afflicted

mother in an unsuccessful hovel in an obscure village in Herts, where they have been long struggling to make a school without effect; and poor deaf Richard, and the more helpless for being so, is thrown on the wide world.

My first motive in writing, and indeed in calling on you, was to ask if you were enough acquainted with any of the Benchers to lay a plain statement before them of the circumstances of the family. I almost fear not, for you are of another hall. But if you can oblige me and my poor friend, who is now insensible to any favours, pray exert yourself. You cannot say too much good of poor Norris and his poor wife.

Yours ever, CHARLES LAMB.

CCCCI. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Jan. 25, 1827.

My Dear Allsop,—I cannot forbear thanking you for your kind interference with Taylor, whom I do not expect to see in haste at Islington.

It is hardly weather to ask a dog up here, but I need hardly say how happy we shall be to see you. I cannot be out of evenings till John Frost be routed. We came home from Newman St. the other night late, and I was crampt all night.

Loves to Mrs Allsop.

Yours truly,

C. L.

CCCCII. TO THE SAME

Feb. 2nd, 1827.

My dear friend,—I went to Highgate this day. I gave to S. T. C. your letter which he immediately answered, and to which Mrs G. insisted upon adding her own. They seem to me *all* exceedingly to par-

take in your troubles. Pray get over your reluctance to paying him a visit, see and talk with him. Hear what he has to say, connected closely with his own expectations, as to your desire. Something, I believe, is doing for him. But hear him himself, look him and your affairs in the face. Older men than you have surmounted worse difficulties. I should have written strait to you from Highgate, but we have had a source of troubles this last week or two, and yours added to it, have broke my spirits. I could hardly drag to and from Highgate. If you don't like to go, better appoint him *your*, *my* house, or any where, but meet him. I am sure there is great reason you should not shun him, for I found him thinking on your perplexities and wanting to see you.

Mary's and my best love to Mrs Allsop,

Yours ever,

C. LAMB.

CCCCIII. TO C. COWDEN CLARKE

[Feb. 2, 1827.]

Dear Cowden,—Your books are as the gushing of streams in a desert. By the way, you have sent no autobiographies. Your letter seems to imply you had. Nor do I want any. Cowden, they are of the books which I give away. What damn'd Unitarian skewer-soul'd things the general biographies turn out. Rank and Talent you shall have when Mrs Mary has done with 'em. Mary likes Mrs Bedinfield much. For me I read nothing but Astrea—it has turn'd my brain—I go about with a switch turn'd up at the end for a crook; and Lambs being too old, the butcher tells me, my cat follows me in a green ribband. Becky and her cousin are getting pastoral dresses, and then we shall all four go about Arcadizing. O cruel Shepherdess! Inconstant yet fair, and more inconstant for being fair! Her gold ringlets fell in a disorder superior to order!

Come and join us.

I am called the Black Shepherd—you shall be Cowden with the Tuft.

Prosaically, we shall be glad to have you both,—or any two of you — drop in by surprise some Saturday night.

This must go off.

Loves to Vittoria.

C. L.

CCCCIV. TO WILLIAM HONE

[Feb. 5, 1827.]

For God's sake be more sparing of your poetry: your this week's Number has an excess of it.

In haste C. L.

Mr Hone,
22, *Belvidere Place,*
near Suffolk Street, Borough.

CCCCV. TO BENJAMIN R. HAYDON

March, 1827.

Dear Raffaele Haydon,—Did the maid tell you I came to see your picture, not on Sunday but the day before? I think the face and bearing of the Bucephalus tamer very noble, his flesh too effeminate or painty. The skin of the female's back kneeling is much more carnous. I had small time to pick out praise or blame, for two lord-like Bucks came in, upon whose strictures my presence seemed to impose restraint; I plebeian'd off therefore.

I think I have hit on a subject for you, but can't swear it was never executed—I never heard of its being—"Chaucer beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet Street." Think of the old dresses, houses, &c. "It seemeth that both these learned men (Gower and Chaucer) were of the Inner Temple; for not many

years since Master Buckley did see a record in the same house where Geoffry Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet Street."

Yours in haste (salt fish waiting),

C. LAMB.

CCCCVI. TO WILLIAM HONE

[March 20, 1827.]

Damnable *erratum* (can't you notice it?) in the last line but two of the last *Extract* in *No.* 9, *Garrick Plays*—

"Blushing forth golden hair and glorious red":

A sun-bright line spoil'd.

67. *Blush* for *Blushing*.

N.B.—The general Number was excellent. Also a few lines higher—

"Restrain'd Liberty attain'd is sweet"

should have a full stop. 'Tis the end of the old man's speech. These little blemishes kill such delicate things; prose feeds on grosser punctualities. You have now three Numbers in hand; one I sent you yesterday. Of course I send no more till Sunday week.

P.S.—Omitted above, Dear Hone. C. L.

Mr Hone,
No. 22, *Belvidere Place, Southwark.*

CCCCVII. TO THE SAME

[April, 1827.]

Dear H.—Come to our house and not come in. I am quite vex't.—Yours, C.L. . . . There is in Blackwood this month an article MOST AFFECTING indeed,

called *Le Revenant*, and would do more towards abolishing capital punishments than 40,000 Romillies or Montagues. I beg you to read it and see if you can extract any of it—the trial scene in particular.

CCCCVIII. TO HIS ESTEEMED FRIEND, AND EXCELLENT MUSICIAN, V. N., ESQ.

[April 1827.]

Dear Sir,—I conjure you, in the name of all the Sylvan Deities, and of the Muses, whom you honour, and they reciprocally love and honour you, rescue this old and passionate *Ditty*—the very flower of an old, forgotten *Pastoral*, which, had it been in all parts equal, the *Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher had been but a second name in this sort of writing—rescue it from the profane hands of every Common Composer; and in one of your tranquillest moods, when you have most leisure from those sad thoughts which sometimes unworthily beset you — yet a mood in itself not unallied to the better sort of melancholy—laying by, for once, the lofty Organ, with which you shake the Temples, attune, as to the Pipe of Paris himself, to some milder and love-according instrument, this pretty Courtship between Paris and his (then-not-as-yet-forsaken) Œnone. Oblige me, and all more knowing Judges of Music and of Poesy, by the adaptation of fit musical numbers, which it only wants, to be the rarest Love Dialogue in our Language.

Your Implore

C. L.

CCCCIX. TO THOMAS HOOD

[May 1827.]

Dearest Hood,—Your news has spoil'd us a merry meeting. Miss Kelly and we were coming, but your letter elicited a flood of tears from Mary, and I saw

she was not fit for a party. God bless you and the mother (or should be mother) of your sweet girl that should have been. I have won sexpence of Moxon by the *sex* of the dear gone one.

Yours most truly and hers,
C. L.

CCCCX. TO BERNARD BARTON

June 11th 1827
Enfield
& for some weeks to come.

Dear B. B.

One word more of the picture verses, and that for good and all; pray, with a neat pen alter one line

His learning seems to lay small stress on

to

His learning lays no mighty stress on

to avoid the unseemly recurrence (ungrammatical also) of "seems" in the next line, besides the nonsense of "but" there, as it now stands. And I request you, as a personal favor to me, to erase the last line of all, which I should never have written from myself. The fact is, it was a silly joke of Hood's, who gave me the frame, (you judg'd rightly it was not its own) with the remark that you would like it, because it was b—d b—d,—and I lugg'd it in: but I shall be quite hurt if it stands, because tho' you and yours have too good sense to object to it, I would not have a sentence of mine seen, that to any foolish ear might sound unrespectful to thee. Let it end at appalling; the joke is worse and useless, and hurts the tone of the rest, take your best "ivory-handled" and scrape it forth.

Your specimen of what you might have written is hardly fair. Had it been a present to me, I should have taken a more sentimental tone; but of a trifle from me, it was my cue to speak in an underish tone

of commendation. Prudent *givers* (what a word for such a nothing) disparage their gifts; 'tis an art we have. So you see you wouldn't have been so wrong, taking a higher tone. But enough of nothing.

By the by, I suspected M. of being the disparager of the frame. Hence a *certain line*.

For the frame, 'tis as the room is, where it hangs. It hung up fronting my old cobwebby folios & batter'd furniture (the fruit piece has resum'd its place) and was much better than a spick and span one. But if your room be very neat and your *other pictures* bright with gilt, it should be so too. I can't judge, not having seen: but my dingy study it suited.

Martin's Belshazzar (the picture) I have seen, its architectural effect is stupendous, but the human figures, the squalling contorted little antics that are playing at being frightened, like children at a sham ghost who half know it to be a mask, are detestable. Then the *letters* are nothing more than a transparency lighted up, such as a Lord might order to be lit up on a sudden at a Christmas gambol to scare the ladies. The *type* is as plain as Baskerville's—they should have been dim, full of mystery, letters to the mind rather than the eye.

Rembrandt has painted only Belshazzar and a courtier or two, (taking a part of the banquet for the whole,) not fribbled out a mob of fine folks. Then every thing is so distinct, to the very necklaces, and that foolish little prophet. What *one* point is there of interest? The ideal of such a subject is, that you the spectator should see nothing but what at the time you would have seen, the *hand*—and the *King*, —not to be at leisure to make tailor-remarks on the dresses, or Doctor Kitchener-like, to examine the good things at table.

Just such a confused piece is his Joshua, frittered into a thousand fragments, little armies here, little armies there—you should see only the *Sun* and

Joshua,—if I remember, he has not left out that luminary entirely, but for Joshua, I was ten minutes a finding him out.

Still he is showy in all that is not the human figure or the preternatural interest: but the first are below a drawing-school girl's attainment, and the last is a phantasmagoric trick,—"Now you shall see what you shall see, dare is Balshazar, and dare is Daniel."

You have my thoughts of M., and so adieu

C. LAMB.

CCCCXI. TO EDITOR OF "TABLE BOOK"

[June, 1827.]

Dear Sir,—Somebody has fairly play'd a *hoax* on you (I suspect that pleasant rogue M-x-n) in sending the sonnet in my name inserted in your last Number. True it is, that I must own to the Verses being mine, but not written on the occasion there pretended, for I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing the Lady in the part of "Emmeline"; and I have understood, that the force of her acting in it is rather in the expression of new-born sight, than of the previous want of it. The lines were really written upon her performance in the "Blind Boy," and appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* years back. I suppose, our facetious friend thought that they would serve again, like an old coat new turned.

Yours (and his nevertheless)

C. LAMB.

CCCCXII. TO P. G. PATMORE

Londres, Julie 19, 1827.

Dear P.,—I am so poorly. I have been to a funeral, where I made a pun, to the consternation of the rest of the mourners. And we had wine. I can't describe to you the howl which the widow set up at proper

intervals. Dash could, for it was not unlike what he makes.

The letter I sent you was one directed to the care of E. W——, India House, for Mrs H. *Which* Mrs H—— I don't yet know; but A—— has taken it to France on speculation. Really it is embarrassing. There is Mrs present H., Mrs late H., and Mrs John H., and to which of the three Mrs Wigginses it appertains, I know not. I wanted to open it, but 'tis transportation.

I am sorry you are plagued about your book. I would strongly recommend you to take for one story Massinger's *Old Law*. It is exquisite. I can think of no other.

Dash is frightful this morning. He whines and stands up on his hind legs. He misses Becky, who is gone to town. I took him to Barnet the other day, and he couldn't eat his vittles after it. Pray God his intellectuals be not slipping.

Mary is gone out for some soles. I suppose 'tis no use to ask you to come and partake of 'em; else there is a steam vessel.

I am doing a tragi-comedy in two acts, and have got on tolerably; but it will be refused, or worse. I never had luck with any thing my name was put to.

O, I am so poorly! I *waked* it at my cousin's the bookbinder, who is now with God; or, if he is not, 'tis no fault of mine.

We hope the frank wines do not disagree with Mrs P——. By the way, I like her.

Did you ever taste frogs? Get them if you can. They are like little Lilliput rabbits, only a thought nicer.

How sick I am!—not of the world, but of the widow's shrub. She's sworn under £6,000, but I think she perjured herself. She howls in E *la*, and I comfort her in B flat. You understand music?

If you hav'n't got Massinger, you have nothing to

do but go to the first Bibliothèque you can light upon at Boulogne, and ask for it (Gifford's edition); and if they hav'n't got it you can have "Athalie" par Monsieur Racine, and make the best of it. But that *Old Law* is delicious.

"No shrimps!" (that's in answer to Mary's question about how the soles are to be done).

I am uncertain where this wandering letter may reach you. What you mean by Poste Restante, God knows. Do you mean I must pay the postage? So I do, to Dover.

We had a merry passage with the widow at the Commons. She was howling—part howling and part giving directions to the proctor—when crash! down went my sister through a crazy chair, and made the clerks grin, and I grinned, and the widow tittered, and then I knew that she was not inconsolable. Mary was more frightened than hurt.

She'd make a good match for any body (by she I mean the widow).

> "If he bring but a *relict* away,
> He is happy, nor heard to complain."
>
> SHENSTONE.

Procter has got a wen growing out at the nape of his neck, which his wife wants him to have cut off; but I think it is rather an agreeable excrescence: like his poetry, redundant. Hone has hanged himself for debt. Godwin was taken up for picking pockets. Moxon has fallen in love with Emma, our nut-brown maid. Becky takes to bad courses. Her father was blown up in a steam machine. The coroner found it "insanity." I should not like him to sit on my letter.

Do you observe my direction. Is it Gallic—classical? Do try and get some frogs. You must ask for "grenouilles" (green eels). They don't

understand "frogs," though 'tis a common phrase with us.

If you go through Bulloign (Boulogne), inquire if old Godfrey is living, and how he got home from the crusades. He must be a very old man.

If there is any thing new in politics or literature in France, keep it till I see you again, for I'm in no hurry. Chatty Briant is well, I hope.

I think I have no more news; only give both our loves (all three, says Dash,) to Mrs P——, and bid her get quite well, as I am at present, bating qualms, and the grief incident to losing a valuable relation.

C. L.

CCCCXIII. TO MRS SHELLEY

Enfield, July 26, 1827.

Dear Mrs Shelley,—At the risk of throwing away some fine thoughts, I must write to say how pleased we were with your very kind remembering of us (who have unkindly run away from all our friends) before you go. Perhaps you are gone, and then my tropes are wasted. If any piece of better fortune has lighted upon you than you expected, but less than we wish you, we are rejoiced. We are here trying to like solitude, but have scarce enough to justify the experiment. We get some, however. The six days are our Sabbath; the seventh—why, Cockneys will come for a little fresh air, and so—

But by *your month*, or October at furthest, we hope to see Islington: I, like a giant refreshed with the leaving off of wine; and Mary, pining for Mr Moxon's books and Mr Moxon's society. Then we shall meet.

I am busy with a farce in two acts; the incidents tragi-comic. I can do the dialogue *commey for*: but the damned plot—I believe I must omit it altogether. The scenes come after one another like geese, not

marshalling like cranes or a Hyde Park review. The story is as simple as G[eorge] D[yer], and the language plain as his spouse. The characters are three women to one man; which is one more than laid hold on him in the "Evangely." I think that prophecy squinted towards my drama.

I want some Howard Paine to sketch a skeleton of artfully succeeding scenes through a whole play, as the courses are arranged in a cookery book: I to find wit, passion, sentiment, character, and the like trifles: to lay in the dead colours,—I'd Titianesque 'em up: to mark the channel in a cheek (smooth or furrowed, yours or mine,) and where tears should course I'd draw the waters down: to say where a joke should come in or a pun be left out: to bring my *personæ* on and off like a Beau Nash; and I'd Frankenstein them there: to bring three together on the stage at once; they are so shy with me, that I can get no more than two; and there they stand till it is the time, without being the season, to withdraw them.

I am teaching Emma Latin to qualify her for a superior governess-ship; which we see no prospect of her getting. 'Tis like feeding a child with chopped hay from a spoon. Sisyphus his labours were as nothing to it. Actives and passives jostle in her nonsense, till a deponent enters, like Chaos, more to embroil the fray. Her prepositions are suppositions; her conjunctions copulative have no connection in them; her concords disagree; her interjections are purely English "Ah!" and "Oh!" with a yawn and a gape in the same tongue; and she herself is a lazy, blockheadly supine. As I say to her, ass *in præsenti* rarely makes a wise man *in futuro*.

But I dare say it was so with you when you began Latin, and a good while after.

Good-by! Mary's love.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

CCCCXIV. TO SIR JOHN STODDART

[Aug. 9, 1827.]

Dear Knight — Old Acquaintance, — 'Tis with a violence to the *pure imagination* (*vide* the "Excursion" *passim*) that I can bring myself to believe I am writing to Dr Stoddart once again, at Malta. But the deductions of severe reason warrant the proceeding. I write from Enfield, where we are seriously weighing the advantages of dulness over the over-excitement of too much company, but have not yet come to a conclusion. What is the news? for we see no paper here; perhaps you can send us an old one from Malta. Only, I heard a butcher in the market-place whisper something about a change of ministry. I don't know who's in or out, or care, only as it might affect *you*. For domestic doings, I have only to tell, with extreme regret, that poor Elisa Fenwick (that was)—Mrs Rutherford—is dead; and that we have received a most heart-broken letter from her mother—left with four grandchildren, orphans of a living scoundrel lurking about the pothouses of Little Russell Street, London: they and she—God help 'em!—at New York. I have just received Godwin's third volume of the *Republic*, which only reaches to the commencement of the Protectorate. I think he means to spin it out to his life's thread. Have you seen Fearn's *Anti-Tooke*? I am no judge of such things—you are; but I think it very clever indeed. If I knew your bookseller, I'd order it for you at a venture: 'tis two octavos, Longman and Co. Or do you read now? Tell it not in the Admiralty Court, but my head aches *hesterno vino*. I can scarce pump up words, much less ideas, congruous to be sent so far. But your son must have this by to-night's post. . . . Manning is gone to Rome, Naples, &c.; probably to touch at Sicily, Malta, Guernsey, &c.; but I don't know the map. Hazlitt is resident at Paris, whence he pours his lampoons in safety at his friends in

England. He has his boy with him. I am teaching Emma Latin. By the time you can answer this, she will be qualified to instruct young ladies: she is a capital English reader: and S. T. C. acknowledges that a part of a passage in Milton she read better than he, and part he read best, her part being the shorter. But, seriously, if Lady St—— (oblivious pen that was about to write *Mrs*!) could hear of such a young person wanted (she smatters of French, some Italian, music of course), we'd send our loves by her. My congratulations and assurances of old esteem.

C. L.

CCCCXV. TO BERNARD BARTON

August 10, 1827.

Dear B. B.,—I have not been able to answer you, for we have had and are having (I just snatch a moment) our poor quiet retreat, to which we fled from society, full of company, some staying with us, and this moment as I write almost, a heavy importation of two old Ladies has come in. Whither can I take wing from the oppression of human faces. Would I were in a wilderness of Apes, tossing cocoanuts about, grinning and grinned at!

Mitford was hoaxing you, surely, about my Engraving, 'tis a little sixpenny thing, too like by half, in which the draughtsman has done his best to avoid flattery. There have been two editions of it, which I think are all gone, as they have vanish'd from the window where they hung, a print-shop, corner of Great and Little Queen Streets, Lincoln's Inn Fields, where any London friend of yours may inquire for it: for I am (tho' you *won't understand it*) at Enfield Chase (Mrs Leishman's). We have been here near three months, and shall stay two more, if people will let us alone, but they persecute us from village to

village. So don't direct to *Islington* again, till further notice.

I am trying my hand at a drama, in two acts, founded on Crabbe's "Confidant," *mutatis mutandis*.

You like the Odyssey. Did you ever read my "Adventures of Ulysses," founded on Chapman's old translation of it? For children, or *men* Chapman is divine, and my abridgment has not quite emptied him of his divinity. When you come to town I'll show it you.

You have well described your old-fashioned Grandpaternal hall. Is it not odd that every one's earliest recollections are of some such place. I had my Blakesware (Blakesmoor in the *London*). Nothing fills a child's mind like a large old mansion; better if un — or partially — occupied; peopled with the spirits of deceased members of the County and Justices of the Quorum. Would I were buried in the peopled solitude of one, with my feelings at seven years old.

Those marble busts of the Emperors, they seem'd as if they were to stand for ever, as they had stood

from the living days of Rome, in that old marble hall, and I to partake of their permanency. Eternity was, while I thought not of Time. But he thought of me, and they are toppled down, and corn covers the spot of the noble old Dwelling and its princely gardens.

I feel like a grasshopper that chirping about the grounds escaped his scythe only by my littleness. Ev'n now he is whetting one of his smallest razors to clean wipe me out perhaps. Well!

CCCCXVI. TO WILLIAM HONE

[Aug. 10, 1827.]

My dear Hone,—We are both excessively grieved at dear Matilda's illness, whom we have ever regarded with the greater respect. Pray God, your next news, which we shall expect most anxiously, shall give hopes of her recovery.

Mary keeps her health very well, and joins in kind remembrances and best wishes.

A few more Numbers (about 7) will empty my Extract Book; then we will consult about the "Specimens." By then, I hope you will be able to talk about business. How you continue your book at all, and so well, in trying circumstances, I know not. But don't let it stop. Would to God I could help you!—but we have the house full of company, which we came to avoid.—God bless you. C. L.

Mr Hone,
22, *Belvidere Place,*
Southwark.

CCCCXVII. TO BERNARD BARTON

August 28th, 1827.

I have left a place for a wafer, but can't find it again.

Dear B. B.,—I am thankful to you for your ready compliance with my wishes. Emma is delighted with your verses, to which I have appended this notice, "The 6th line refers to the child of a dear friend of the author's, named Emma," without which it must be obscure, and have sent it with four Album poems of my own (your daughter's with your heading, requesting it a place next mine,) to a Mr Fraser, who is to be editor of a more superb Pocket-book than has yet appeared, by far! the property of some wealthy booksellers; but whom, or what its name, I forgot to ask. It is actually to have in it schoolboy exercises by his present Majesty and the late Duke of York, so Lucy will come to Court; how she will be stared at! Wordsworth is named as a contributor. Fraser, whom I have slightly seen, is Editor of a forth-come or coming Review of foreign books, and is intimately connected with Lockhart, &c. so I take it that this is a concern of Murray's. Walter Scott also contributes mainly. I have stood off a long time from these Annuals, which are ostentatious trumpery, but could not withstand the request of Jameson, a particular friend of mine and Coleridge.

I shall hate myself in frippery, strutting along, and vying finery with beaux and belles, with

"future Lord Byrons and sweet L.E.L.'s."

Your taste, I see, is less simple than mine, which the difference in our persuasions has doubtless effected. In fact, of late you have so frenchify'd your style, larding it with *hors de combats*, and *au desopoirs*, that o' my conscience the Foxian blood is quite dried out of you, and the skipping Monsieur spirit has been infused. Doth Lucy go to Balls? I must remodel my lines, when I write for her. I hope A. K. keeps to her Primitives. If you have any thing you'd like to send

further, I don't know Frazer's address, but I sent mine thro' Mr Jamieson, 19 or 20 Cheyne Street, Tottenham Court Road. I dare say an honourable place would be given to them; but I have not heard from Fraser since I sent mine, nor shall probably again, and therefore I do not solicit it as from him.

Yesterday I sent off my tragi-comedy to Mr Kemble. Wish it luck. I made it all ('tis blank verse, and I think of the true old dramatic cut) or most of it, in the green lanes about Enfield, where I am and mean to remain, in spite of your peremptory doubts on that head.

Your refusal to lend your poetical sanction to my Icon, and your reasons to Evans, are most sensible. Maybe I may hit on a line or two of my own, jocular. Maybe not.

Do you never Londonize again? I should like to talk over old poetry with you, of which I have much, and you, I think, little. Do your Drummonds allow no holidays? I would willingly come and work for you a three weeks or so, to let you loose. Would I could sell or give you some of my Leisure! Positively, the best thing a man can have to do is nothing, and next to that perhaps—good works.

I am but poorlyish, and feel myself writing a dull letter; poorlyish from Company, not generally, for I never was better nor took more walks, fourteen miles a day on an average, with a sporting dog—Dash—you would not know the plain Poet, any more than he doth recognise James Naylor trick'd out *au deserpoy* (how do you spell it). *En Passant, J'ai me entendre da mon bon homme sur surveillance de croix, ma pas l'homme figuratif*—do you understand me?

C. Lamb.

CCCCXVIII. TO WILLIAM HONE

Sunday, 2d Sept. [1827.]

Dear Hone,—By the verses in yesterday's *Table Book*, sign'd *, I judge you are going on better; but

I want to be resolv'd. Allsop promised to call on you, and let me know, but has not. Pray attend to this; and send me the number before the present (pages 225 to 256), which my newsman has neglect'd. Your book improves every week. I have written here a thing in two acts, and sent it to Covent Garden.

Yours,

C. LAMB.

CCCCXIX. TO P. G. PATMORE

[? September, 1827.]

Mrs Leishman's, Chase, Enfield.

Dear P.,—Excuse my anxiety, but how is Dash? I should have asked if Mrs Patmore kept her rules, and was improving; but Dash came uppermost. The order of our thoughts should be the order of our writing. Goes he muzzled, or *aperto ore*? Are his intellects sound, or does he wander a little in *his* conversation? You cannot be too careful to watch the first symptoms of incoherence. The first illogical snarl he makes, to St Luke's with him! All the dogs here are going mad, if you believe the overseers; but I protest they seem to me very rational and collected. But nothing is so deceitful as mad people, to those who are not used to them. Try him with hot water: if he won't lick it up it is a sign he does not like it. Does his tail wag horizontally, or perpendicularly? That has decided the fate of many dogs in Enfield. Is his general deportment cheerful? I mean when he is pleased—for otherwise there is no judging. You can't be too careful. Has he bit any of the children yet? If he has, have them shot, and keep *him* for curiosity, to see if it was the hydrophobia. They say all our army in India had it at one time; but that was in *Hyder*-Ally's time. Do you get paunch for him? Take care the sheep was sane. You might pull out his teeth (if he would let you), and then you need not mind if he were as mad as a

Bedlamite. It would be rather fun to see his odd ways. It might amuse Mrs P—— and the children. They'd have more sense than he. He'd be like a fool kept in a family, to keep the household in good humour with their own understanding. You might teach him the mad dance, set to the mad howl. *Madge Owlet* would be nothing to him. "My! how he capers!" * . . . What I scratch out is a German quotation, from Lessing, on the bite of rabid animals; but I remember you don't read German. But Mrs P—— may, so I wish I had let it stand. The meaning in English is—"Avoid to approach an animal suspected of madness, as you would avoid fire or a precipice," which I think is a sensible observation. The Germans are certainly profounder than we. If the slightest suspicion arises in your breast that all is not right with him, muzzle him and lead him in a string (common pack-thread will do—he don't care for twist) to Mr Hood's, his quondam master, and he'll take him in at any time. You may mention your suspicion, or not, as you like, or as you think it may wound or not Mr H.'s feelings. Hood, I know, will wink at a few follies in Dash, in consideration of his former sense. Besides, Hood is deaf, and if you hinted any thing, ten to one he would not hear you. Besides, you will have discharged your conscience, and laid the child at the right door, as they say.

We are dawdling our time away very idly and pleasantly at a Mrs Leishman's, Chase, Enfield, where, if you come a-hunting, we can give you cold meat and a tankard. Her husband is a tailor; but that, you know, does not make her one. I knew a jailor (which rhymes), but his wife was a fine lady.

Let us hear from you respecting Mrs P——'s regimen. I send my love in a —— to Dash.

C. Lamb.

* In the margin is written, "One of the children speaks this."—Ed.

Seriously, I wish you would call upon Hood when you are that way. He's a capital fellow. I've sent him two poems, one ordered by his wife, and written to order; and 'tis a week since, and I've not heard from him. I fear something is the matter.

Our kindest remembrance to Mrs P.

CCCCXX. TO J. B. DIBDIN

September 5, 1827.

Dear Dib,—Emma Isola, who is with us, has opened an *album*: bring some verses with you for it on Saturday evening. Any *fun* will do. I am teaching her Latin; you may make something of that. Don't be modest. For in it you shall appear, if I rummage out some of your old pleasant letters for rhymes. But an original is better.

Has your Pa* any scrap? C. L.

We shall be *most* glad to see your sister or *sisters*, with you. Can't you contrive it? Write in that case.

T. Dibdin, Esq.,
Messrs Railtons',
Old Jewry, London.

CCCCXXI. TO THE SAME

September 13, 1827.

Dear *John*,—Your verses are very pleasant, and have been adopted into the splendid Emmatic constellation, where they are not of the least magnitude. She is delighted with their merit and readiness. They are just the thing. The fourteenth line is found. We advertised it. "Hell is cooling for want of company." We shall make it up along with our

* The infantile word for "father."

kitchen fire to roast you into our new House, where I hope you will find us in a few Sundays. We have actually taken it, and a compact thing it will be.

Kemble does not return till the month's end. My heart sometimes is good, sometimes bad, about it, as the day turns out wet or walky.

Emma has just died, chok'd with a Gerund-in-dum. On opening her, we found a Participle-in-rus in the pericardium. The King never dies, which may be the reason that it always *reigns* here.

We join in loves. C. L. his orthograph.

What a pen!
The Umberella is cum bak.

Mr John B. Dibdin,
Messrs Rankings,
Old Jewry.

CCCCXXII. TO THE SAME

September 18, 1827.

My dear, and now more so, *John*,—How that name smacks! What an honest, full, English, and yet withal holy and apostolic sound it bears, above the methodistical priggish Bishoppy name of Timothy, under which I had obscured your merits!

What I think of the paternal verses, you shall read within, which I assure you is not pen praise, but heart praise. It is the gem of the Dibdin Muses.

I have got all my books into my new house, and their readers in a fortnight will follow, to whose joint converse nobody shall be more welcome than you and *any of yours*.

The house is perfection to our use and comfort. Milton is come. I wish Wordsworth were here to meet him. The next importation is of pots and

saucepans, window curtains, crockery, and such base ware.

The pleasure of moving, when Becky moves for you. O the moving Becky!

I hope you will come and *warm* the house with the first.

From my temporary domicile, Enfield.

Elia, that "is to go."

Mr John Dibdin,
Messrs Rankings,
Old Jewry.

CCCCXXIII. TO THOMAS HOOD

Tuesday, [September 18, 1827].

Dear Hood,—If I have anything in my head, I will send it to Mr Watts. Strictly speaking, he should have had my album-verses, but a very intimate friend importun'd me for the trifles, and I believe I forgot Mr Watts, or lost sight at the time of his similar *souvenir*. Jamieson conveyed the farce from me to Mrs. C. Kemble; *he* will not be in town before the 27th. Give our kind loves to all at Highgate, and tell them that we have finally torn ourselves outright away from Colebrooke, where I had *no* health, and are about to domiciliate for good at Enfield, where I have experienced *good*.

> "Lord, what good hours do we keep!
> How quietly we sleep!"

See the rest in the *Complete Angler*.

We have got our books into our new house. I am a dray-horse, if [I] was not asham'd of the undigested, dirty lumber, as I toppled 'em out of the cart, and blest Becky that came with 'em for her having an unstuff'd brain with such rubbish. We shall get in by Michael's Mass. 'Twas with some pain we were evuls'd from Colebrook. You may find some of our

flesh sticking to the door-posts. To change habitations is to die to them; and in my time I have died seven deaths. But I don't know whether every such change does not bring with it a rejuvenescence. 'Tis an enterprise; and shoves back the sense of death's approximating, which, tho' not terrible to me, is at all times particularly distasteful. My house-deaths have generally been periodical, recurring after seven years; but this last is premature by half that time. Cut off in the flower of Colebrook! The Middletonian stream, and all its echoes, mourn. Even minnows dwindle. *A parvis fiunt minimi!* I fear to invite Mrs Hood to our new mansion, lest she envy it, and hate us. But when we are fairly in, I hope she will come and try it. I heard she and you were made uncomfortable by some unworthy-to-be-cared-for attacks, and have tried to set up a feeble counter-action thro' the *Table Book* of last Saturday. Has it not reach'd you, that you are silent about it? Our new domicile is no manor-house; but new, and externally not inviting, but furnish'd within with every convenience: capital new locks to every door, capital grates in every room; with nothing to pay for incoming; and the rent 10*l.* less than the Islington one. It was built, a few years since, at 1100*l.* expence, they tell me—and I perfectly believe it. And I get it for 35*l.*, exclusive of moderate taxes. We think ourselves most lucky.

It is not our intention to abandon Regent Street, and West-End perambulations (monastic and terrible thought!), but occasionally to breathe the fresher air of the metropolis. We shall put up a bedroom or two (all we want) for occasional ex-rustication, where we shall visit—not be visited. Plays, too, we'll see—perhaps our own; Urbani Sylvani and Sylvan Urbanuses in turn; courtiers for a sport, then philosopher; old, homely tell-truths and learn-truths in the virtuous shades of Enfield, liars again and mocking

gibers in the coffee-houses and resorts of London. What can a mortal desire more for his bi-parted nature?

O, the curds-and-cream you shall eat with us here!

O, the turtle-soup and lobster-salads we shall devour with you there!

O, the old books we shall peruse here!

O, the new nonsense we shall trifle over there!

O, Sir T. Browne, here!

O, Mr Hood and Mr Jerdan, there!

Thine,

C. (URBANUS) L. (SYLVANUS)—(ELIA ambo)——

Inclos'd are verses which Emma sat down to write (her first) on the eve after your departure. Of course, they are only for Mrs H.'s perusal. They will shew, at least, that one of our party is not willing to cut old friends. What to call 'em I don't know. Blank verse they are not, because of the rhymes; rhymes they are not, because of the blank verse; heroics they are not, because they are lyric; lyric they are not, because of the heroic measure. They must be call'd Emmaics.

The Hoods, 2, *Robert Street*, *Adelphi*, *London*.

CCCCXXIV. TO BERNARD BARTON

No post mark; 1827.

My dear B. B.,—A gentleman I never saw before brought me your welcome present—imagine a scraping, fiddling, fidgetting, petit-maître of a dancing school advancing into my plain parlour with a coupée and a sideling bow, and presenting the book as if he had been handing a glass of lemonade to a young miss—imagine this, and contrast it with the serious nature of the book presented! Then task your imagination, reversing this picture, to conceive of quite an opposite messenger, a lean, strait-locked, whey-faced Methodist,

for such was he in reality who brought it, the Genius (it seems) of the Wesleyan Magazine. Certes, friend B., thy Widow's tale is too horrible, spite of the lenitives of Religion, to embody in verse, I hold prose to be the appropriate expositor of such atrocities! No offence, but it is a cordial that makes the heart sick. Still thy skill in compounding it I do not deny. I turn to what gave me less mingled pleasure. I find marked with pencil these pages in thy pretty book, and fear I have been penurious :—

Page 52, 53—capital.
,, 59—6th stanza, exquisite simile.
,, 61—11th stanza, equally good.
,, 108—3rd stanza, I long to see Van Balen.
,, 111—A downright good sonnet. *Dixi.*
,, 153—Lines at the bottom.

So you see, I read, hear, and *mark*, if I don't learn. In short this little volume is no discredit to any of your former, and betrays none of the Senility you fear about. *Apropos* of Van Balen, an artist who painted me lately, had painted a Blackamoor praying, and not filling his canvas, stuff'd in his little girl aside of Blacky, gaping at him unmeaningly; and then didn't know what to call it. Now for a picture to be promoted to the Exhibition (Suffolk Street) as *Historical*, a subject is requisite. What does me? I but christen it the "Young Catechist" and furbish'd it with Dialogue following, which dubb'd it an Historical Painting. Nothing to a friend at need.

"While this tawny Ethiop prayeth,
Painter, who is She that stayeth
By, with skin of whitest lustre;
Sunny locks, a shining cluster;
Saint-like seeming to direct him
To the Power that must protect him?
Is she of the heav'n-born Three,
Meek Hope, strong Faith, sweet Charity?
Or some Cherub?

They you mention
Far transcend my weak invention.
'Tis a simple Christian child,
Missionary young and mild,
From her store of script'ral knowledge,
(Bible-taught, without a college,)
Which by reading she could gather,
Teaches him to say Our Father
To the common Parent, who
Colour not respects nor hue.
White and Black in him have part,
Who looks not to the skin, but heart."

When I'd done it, the Artist (who had clapt in Miss merely as a fill-space) swore I exprest his full meaning, and the damosel bridled up into a Missionary's vanity. I like verses to explain Pictures; seldom Pictures to illustrate Poems. Your woodcut is a rueful Lignum Mortis. By the by, is the widow likely to marry again?

I am giving the fruit of my Old Play reading at the Museum to Hone, who sets forth a portion weekly in the *Table Book*. Do you see it? How is Mitford? I'll just hint that the Pitcher, the Cord, and the Bowl are a little too often repeated (passim) in your Book, and that in page 17, last line but 4, *him* is put for *he*. But the poor widow I take it had small leisure for grammatical niceties. Don't you see there's *He*, *myself*, and *Him*; why not both *him*? likewise *impervious*ly is cruelly spelt *imperious*ly. These are trifles, and I honestly like your book, and you for giving it, tho' I really am asham'd of so many presents. I can think of no news, therefore I will end with mine and Mary's kindest remembrances to you and yours.

C. L.

CCCCXXV. TO HENRY COLBURN

Enfield, Chase Side,
September 25, 1827.

Dear Sir,—I beg leave, in the warmest manner, to recommend to your notice, Mr Moxon, the bearer of

this, if by any chance yourself should want a steady hand in your business, or know of any Publisher that may want such a one. He is at present in the house of Messrs Longman and Co., where he has been established for more than six years, and has the conduct of one of the four departments of the Country Line. A difference respecting salary, which he expected to be a little raised on his last promotion, makes him wish to try to better himself. I believe him to be a young man of the highest integrity, and a thorough man of business; and should not have taken the liberty of recommending him, if I had not thought him capable of being highly useful.

I am, Sir,
With great respect,
Your obedient Servant,
CHARLES LAMB.

CCCCXXVI. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 1827.

Dear Allsop, — Your kindness pursues us everywhere. That 81. 4. 6. is a substantial proof, I think; I never should have ask'd for it. Pray keep it, when you get it, till we see each other. I have plenty of current cash; thank you over and over for your offer.

We came down on Monday with Miss James. The 1st night I lay broad awake like an owl till 8 o'clock, then got a poor doze. Have had something like sleep and a forgetting last night. We go on tolerably in this deserted house. It is melancholy, but I could not have gone into a quite strange one.

Newspapers come to you here. Pray stop them. Shall I send what have come?

Give mine and Mary's kindest love to Mrs Allsop, with every good wish to Elizabeth and Rob. This

house is not what it was. May we all meet chearful some day soon.

Yours gratefully and sincerely,

C. LAMB.

How long a letter have I written with my own hand.

Jane says she has sent a cradle yesterday morning; she does for us very well.

CCCCXXVII. TO WILLIAM HONE

[1827.]

Dear Hone,—having occasion to write to Clarke I put in a bit to you. I see no Extracts in this Number. You should have three sets in hand, one long one in particular from *Attreus and Thyestes*, terribly fine. Don't spare 'em; with fragments, divided as you please, they'll hold out to Christmas. What I have to say is enjoined me most seriously to say to you by Moxon. Their country customers grieve at getting the Table Book so late. It is indispensable it should appear on Friday. Do it but *once*, and you'll never know the difference.

Fable

A boy at my school, a cunning fox, for one penny ensured himself a hot roll & butter every morning for ever. Some favor'd ones were allowed a roll & butter to their breakfasts. He had none. But he bought one one morning. What did he do? he did not eat it. But cutting it in two, sold each one of the halves to a half-breakfasted Blue Boy for *his* whole roll to-morrow. The next day he had a whole roll to eat, and two halves to swap with other two boys, who had eat their cake and were still not satiated, for whole ones to-morrow. So on ad infinitum. By one morning's abstinence he feasted seven years after.

Application

Bring out the next N°. on Friday, for country correspondents' sake. It will be one piece of exertion, and you will go right ever after, for you will have just the time you had before, to bring it out ever after by the Friday.

You don't know the difference in getting a thing early. Your correspondents are your authors. You don't know how an author frets to know the world has got his contribution, when he finds it not on his breakfast table.

ONCE in this case is EVER without a grain of trouble afterwards.

I won't like you or speak to you if you dont try it once.

Yours, on that condition,

C. LAMB.

BOOK V.—1827-1834

SEVEN LAST YEARS: GAIETY AMID GATHERING GLOOM

CHAPTER I

THE WHITE HOUSE AT ENFIELD

OCTOBER 1827—OCTOBER 1829

CCCCXXVIII. TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

Chase Side, Oct. 1, 1827.

Dear R.,—I am settled for life, I hope, at Enfield. I have taken the prettiest, compactest house I ever saw, near to Antony Robinson's; but alas! at the expense of my poor Mary, who was taken ill of the old complaint the night before we got into it. So I must suspend the pleasure I expected in the surprise you would have had, in coming down and finding us householders.

Farewell! till we can all meet comfortable. Pray apprise Martin Burney. Him I have longed to have seen with you; but our house is too small to meet either of you without *her* knowledge.

God bless you!

C. LAMB.

CCCCXXIX. TO J. B. DIBDIN

October 2, 1827.

My dear Dibdin,—It gives me great pain to have to say that I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you for

some time. We are in our house, but Mary has been seized with one of her periodical disorders—a temporary derangement—which commonly lasts for two months. You shall have the first notice of her convalescence. Can you not send your manuscript by the coach? directed to Chase Side, next to Mr Westwood's Insurance Office. I will take great care of it.

Yours most truly, C. LAMB.

CCCCXXX. TO BARRON FIELD

October, 4, 1827.

I am not in a humour to return a fit reply to your pleasant letter. We are fairly housed at Enfield, and an angel shall not persuade me to wicked London again. We have now six Sabbath-days in a week for—*none*! The change has worked on my sister's mind to make her ill; and I must wait a tedious time before we can hope to enjoy this place in unison. Enjoy it, when she recovers, I know we shall. I see no shadow, but in her illness, for repenting the step! For Mathews—I know my own utter unfitness for such a task. I am no hand at describing costumes, a great requisite in an account of mannered pictures. I have not the slightest acquaintance with pictorial language even. An imitator of me, or rather pretender to be *me*, in his "Rejected Articles," has made me minutely describe the dresses of the poissardes at Calais!—I could as soon resolve Euclid. I have no eye for forms and fashions. I substitute analysis, and get rid of the phenomenon by slurring in for it its impression. I am sure you must have observed this defect, or peculiarity, in my writings; else the delight would be incalculable in doing such a thing for Mathews, whom I greatly like—and Mrs Mathews, whom I almost greatlier like. What a feast 'twould be to be sitting at the pictures painting 'em into words;

but I could almost as soon make words into pictures. I speak this deliberately, and not out of modesty. I pretty well know what I can't do.

My sister's verses are homely, but just what they should be; I send them, not for the poetry, but the good sense and good will of them. I was beginning to transcribe; but Emma is sadly jealous of its getting into more hands, and I won't spoil it in her eyes by divulging it. Come to Enfield, and *read it*. As my poor cousin, the bookbinder, now with God, told me most sentimentally, that having purchased a picture of fish at a dead man's sale, his heart ached to see how the widow grieved to part with it, being her dear husband's favourite; and he almost apologised for his generosity by saying he could not help telling the widow she was "welcome to come and look at it"—*e.g.* at *his house*—"as often as she pleased." There was the germ of generosity in an uneducated mind. He had just *reading* enough from the backs of books for the "nec sinit esse feros"; had he read inside, the same impulse would have lead him to give back the two-guinea thing — with a request to see it, now and then, at *her* house. We are parroted into delicacy.—Thus you have a tale for a Sonnet.

Adieu! with (imagine both) our loves.

C. L.

CCCCXXXI. TO WILLIAM HONE

[? October, 1827.]

Dear H.,—May I trouble your kindness (a pretty phrase and new) to transmit for me the accompanying farce (which I leave open for your *amusement*) to Terry, with the enclosed, at the Adelphi; or his own house, if it can be there learned, and is not far distant, still better. I have no messenger, and am crippled for going so far. The letter must go with

it. I return, with the farce, three books. Pick out the *Cobbler*.

Yours, "every day," C. L.

Mr Hone,
With four Books.

CCCCXXXII. TO THE SAME

[Oct. 1827.]

Dear Hone,—I was most sensibly gratified by receiving the *T*—— *B*—— on Friday evening at Enfield!!

Thank you. In haste, C. L.

Don't spare the Extracts. They'll eke out till Christmas.

How is your daughter?

Mr Hone,
22, *Belvidere Place,*
Southwark.

CCCCXXXIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

Chase Side, Enfield, 1827.

My dear B. B.,—You will understand my silence when I tell you that my sister, on the very eve of entering into a new house we have taken at Enfield, was surprised with an attack of one of her sad long illnesses, which deprive me of her society, tho' not of her domestication, for eight or nine weeks together. I see her, but it does her no good. But for this, we have the snuggest, most comfortable house, with every thing most compact and desirable. Colebrook is a wilderness. The Books, prints, &c., are come here, and the New River came down with us. The familiar Prints, the Bust, the Milton, seem scarce to have changed their rooms. One of her last observations was "how frightfully like this room is to our room in Islington"—our up-stairs room, she meant. How I hope you will come some better day, and judge of

it! We have tried quiet here for four months, and I will answer for the comfort of it enduring.

On emptying my bookshelves I found an Ulysses, which I will send to A. K. when I go to town, for her acceptance—unless the Book be out of print. One likes to have one copy of every thing one does. I neglected to keep one of "Poetry for Children," the joint production of Mary and me, and it is not to be had for love or money. It had in the title-page "by the Author of Mrs Lester's School." Know you any one that has it, and would exchange it?

Strolling to Waltham Cross the other day, I hit off these lines. It is one of the Crosses which Edward I. caused to be built for his wife at every town where her corpse rested between Northamptonshire and London:—

> A stately Cross each sad spot doth attest,
> Whereat the corpse of Elinor did rest,
> From Herdby fetch'd—her spouse so honour'd her—
> To sleep with royal dust at Westminster.
> And, if less pompous obsequies were thine,
> Duke Brunswick's daughter, princely Caroline,
> Grudge not, great ghost, nor count thy funeral losses:
> Thou in thy life-time had'st thy share of crosses.

My dear B. B.,—My head aches with this little excursion. Pray accept 2 sides for 3 for once, and believe me yours sadly, C. L.

CCCCXXXIV. TO THE SAME

Dec. 4th, 1827.

My dear B. B.,—I have scarce spirits to write, yet am harass'd with not writing. Nine weeks are completed, and Mary does not get any better. It is perfectly exhausting. Enfield and everything is very gloomy. But for long experience, I should fear her ever getting well.

I feel most thankful for the spinsterly attentions of your sister. Thank the kind "knitter in the sun."

What nonsense seems verse, when one is seriously out of hope and spirits! I mean that at this time I have some nonsense to write under pain of incivility. Would to the fifth heaven no coxcombess had invented Albums.

I have not had a Bijoux, nor the slightest notice from Pickering about omitting four out of five of my things. The best thing is never to hear of such a thing as a bookseller again, or to think there are publishers, second-hand Stationers and old Book-stalls for me. Authorship should be an idea of the Past.

Old kings, old bishops, are venerable. All present is hollow.

I cannot make a Letter. I have no straw, not a pennyworth of chaff, only this may stop your kind importunity to know about us.

Here is a comfortable house, but no tenants. One does not make a household.

Do not think I am quite in despair, but, in addition to hope protracted, I have a stupifying cold and obstructing headache, and the sun is dead.

I will not fail to apprise you of the revival of a beam.

Meantime accept this, rather than think I have forgotten you all. Best remembrances.

Yours and theirs truly, C. LAMB.

CCCCXXXV. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[Dec., 1827.]

My Dear Allsop,—Thanks for the Birds. Your announcement puzzles me sadly, as nothing came. I send you back a word in your letter which I can positively make nothing of, and therefore return to you as useless. It means to refer to the birds, but gives me no information. They are [on], the fire, however.

My Sister's illness is the most obstinate she ever

had. It will not go away, and I am afraid Miss James will not be able to stay above a day or two longer. I am desperate to think of it sometimes.

'Tis eleven weeks!

The day is sad as my prospects.

With kindest love to Mrs A. and the Children.

Yours,

C. L.

No Atlas this week. Poor Hone's good boy Alfred has fractured his skull; another son is returned "dead" from the Navy Office; and his Book is going to be given up, not having answered. What a world of troubles this is!

CCCCXXXVI. TO LEIGH HUNT

1827.

Dear H.,—I am here almost in the eleventh week of the longest illness my sister ever had, and no symptoms of amendment. Some had begun, but relapsed with a change of nurse. If she ever gets well, you will like my house, and I shall be happy to show you Enfield country.

As to my head, it is perfectly at your or any one's service; either Myers' or Hazlitt's,—which last (done fifteen or twenty years since) White, of the Accountant's Office, India House, has; he lives in Kentish Town—I forget where; but is to be found in Leadenhall daily. Take your choice. I should be proud to hang up as an alehouse-sign even; or, rather, I care not about my head or any thing, but how we are to get well again, for I am tired out.

God bless you and yours from the worst calamity.

Yours truly,

C. L.

Kindest remembrances to Mrs Hunt. H.'s is in a queer dress. M.'s would be preferable *ad populum*.

CCCCXXXVII. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

1827. Enfield.

Dear A.,—Don't come yet. The house is so small. Mary hears every person and every knock. She is very bad yet, but I hope ere long to have you here. Thanks for the paper. N.B., none came last week.

God bless you, and love to Mrs A.,

C. L.

CCCCXXXVIII. TO THE SAME

Dec. 20, 1827.

My Dear Allsop,—I have writ to say to you that I hope to have a comfortable X-mas-day with Mary, and I cannot bring myself to go from home at present. Your kind offer, and the kind consent of the young Lady to come, we feel as we should do; pray accept all of you our kindest thanks: at present I think a Visitor (good and excellent as we remember her to be) might a little put us out of our way. Emma is with us, and our small house just holds us, without obliging Mary to sleep with Becky, &c.

We are going on extremely comfortable, and shall soon be in capacity of seeing our friends. Much weakness is left still. With thanks and old remembrances,

Yours,

C. L.

CCCCXXXIX. TO BERNARD BARTON

(No post mark) 1827.

My dear B.,—We are all pretty well again and comfortable, and I take a first opportunity of sending the Adventures of Ulysses, hoping that among us—Homer, Chapman, and Co.—we shall afford you some pleasure. I fear, it is out of print; if not, A. K. will accept it, with wishes it were bigger; if another copy is not to be had, it reverts to me and my heirs *for ever*. With it I send a trumpery book; to which,

without my knowledge the editor of the Bijoux has contributed Lucy's verses: I am asham'd to ask her acceptance of the trash accompanying it. Adieu to Albums—for a great while—I said when I came here; and had not been fixed two days, but my Landlord's daughter (not at the Pothouse) requested me to write in her female friend's and in her own; if I go to ——, thou art there also, O all pervading Album! All over the Leeward Islands, in Newfoundland, and the Back Settlements, I understand there is no other reading. They haunt me. I die of Albo-phobia!

C. L.

CCCCXL. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Jan. 2, 1828

Dear Allsop,—I have been very poorly and nervous lately; but on recovering sleep, &c., I do not write or make engagements for particular days: but I need not say how pleasant your dropping in any Sunday morning would be. Perhaps Jameson would accompany you. Pray beg him to keep an accurate record of the warning I sent him to old Pau., for I dread lest he should at the 12 months' end deny the warning. The house is his daughter's, but we took it through him, and have paid the rent to his receipts for his daughter's. Consult J. if he thinks the warning sufficient. I am very nervous, or have been, about the house; lost my sleep, and expected to be ill; but slumbered gloriously last night, golden slumbers. I shall not relapse; you fright me with your inserted slips in the most welcome Atlas. They begin to charge double for it, and call it two sheets. How can I confute them by opening it, when a note of yours might slip out, and we get in a hobble? When you write, write real letters. Mary's best love and mine to Mrs A.

Yours Ever, C. Lamb.

CCCCXLI. TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

Enfield, 25 Feb. [1828].

My Dear Clarke,—You have been accumulating on me such a heap of pleasant obligations that I feel uneasy in writing as to a Benefactor. Your smaller contributions, the little weekly rills, are refreshments in the Desart, but your large books were feasts. I hope Mrs Hazlitt, to whom I encharged it, has taken Hunt's Lord B. to the Novellos. His picture of Literary Lordship is as pleasant as a disagreeable subject can be made, his own poor man's Education at dear Christ's is as good and hearty as the subject. Hazlitt's speculative episodes are capital; I skip the Battles. But how did I deserve to have the Book? The *Companion* has too much of Madam Pasta. Theatricals have ceased to be popular attractions. His walk home after the Play is as good as the best of the old Indicators. The watchmen are emboxed in a niche of fame, save the skaiting one that must be still fugitive. I wish I could send a scrap for good will. But I have been most seriously unwell and nervous a long long time. I have scarce mustered courage to begin this short note, but conscience duns me.

I had a pleasant letter from your sister, greatly over acknowledging my poor sonnet. I think I should have replied to it, but tell her I think so. Alas for sonnetting, 'tis as the nerves are; all the summer I was dawdling among green lanes, and verses came as thick as fancies. I am sunk winterly below prose and zero.

But I trust the vital principle is only as under snow. That I shall yet laugh again.

I suppose the great change of place affects me, but I could not have lived in Town, I could not bear company.

I see Novello flourishes in the Del Capo line, and dedications are not forgotten. I read the *Atlas*. When I pitched on the Dedication I looked for the Broom of

"*Cowden* knows" to be harmonized, but 'twas summat of Rossini's.

I want to hear about Hone, does he stand above water, how is his son? I have delay'd writing to him, till it seems impossible. Break the ice for me.

The wet ground here is intolerable, the sky above clear and delusive, but under foot quagmires from night showers, and I am cold-footed and moisture-abhorring as a cat; nevertheless I yesterday tramped to Waltham Cross; perhaps the poor bit of exertion necessary to scribble this was owing to the unusual bracing.

If I get out, I shall get stout, and then something will out—I mean for the *Companion*—you see I rhyme insensibly.

Traditions are rife here of one Clarke a schoolmaster, and a runaway pickle named Holmes, but much obscurity hangs over it. Is it possible they can be any relations?

'Tis worth the research, when you can find a sunny day, with ground firm, &c. Master Sexton is intelligent, and for half-a-crown he'll pick you up a Father.

In truth we shall be most glad to see any of the Novellian circle, middle of the week such as can come, or Sunday, as can't. But Spring will burgeon out quickly, and then, we'll talk more.

You'd like to see the improvements on the Chase, the new Cross in the market-place, the Chandler's shop from whence the rods were fetch'd. They are raised a farthing since the spread of Education. But perhaps you don't care to be reminded of the Holofernes' days, and nothing remains of the old laudable profession, but the clear, firm, impossible-to-be-mistaken schoolmaster text hand with which is subscribed the ever-welcome name of Chas. Cowden C. Let me crowd in both our loves to all.—C. L. [*Added on the fold-down of the letter:*] Let me never be for-

gotten to include in my remembrances my good friend and whilom correspondent Master Stephen.

How, especially, is Victoria?

I try to remember all I used to meet at Shacklewell. The little household, cake-producing, wine-bringing out Emma—the old servant, that didn't stay, and ought to have staid, and was always very dirty and friendly, and Miss H., the counter-tenor with a fine voice, whose sister married Thurtell. They all live in my mind's eye, and Mr N.'s and Holmes's walks with us half back after supper. Troja fuit!

* * * * * * *

CCCCXLII. TO EDWARD MOXON

March 19th, 1828.

My dear M.,—It is my firm determination to have nothing to do with "Forget-me-Nots"; pray excuse me as civilly as you can to Mr Hurst. I will take care to refuse any other applications. The things which Pickering has, if to be had again, I have promised absolutely, you know, to poor Hood, from whom I had a melancholy epistle yesterday; besides that Emma has decided objections to her own and her friend's album verses being published; but if she gets over that, they are decidedly Hood's.

Till we meet, farewell. Loves to Dash.

C. L.

CCCCXLIII. TO REV. EDWARD IRVING

Enfield Chase,
3rd April, 1828.

Dear Sir,—I take advantage from the kindness which I have experienced from you in a slight acquaintance to introduce to you my very respected friend Mr Hone, who is of opinion that your inter-

ference in a point which he will mention to you may prove of essential benefit to him in some present difficulties. I should not take this liberty if I did not feel that you are a person not to be prejudiced by an obnoxious name. All that I know of him obliges me to respect him, and to request your kindness for him, if you can serve him.

With feelings of kindest respect,

I am, dear Sir,

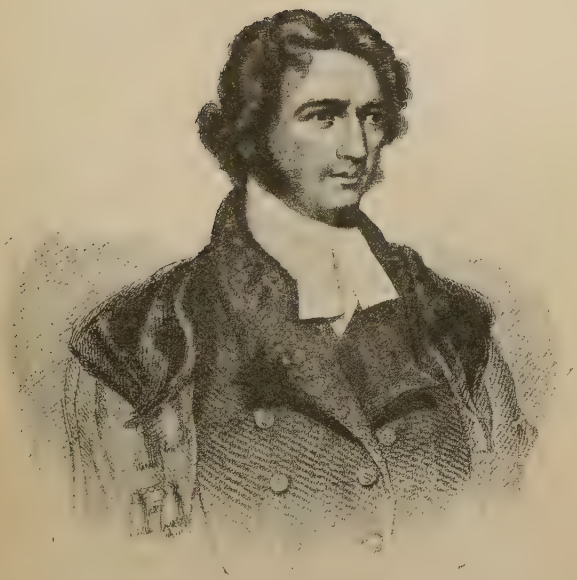
yours truly,

CHAS. LAMB.

CCCCXLIV. TO BERNARD BARTON

April 21st, 1828.

Dear B. B.,—You must excuse my silence. I have been in very poor health and spirits, and cannot write letters. I only write to assure you, as you wish'd, of my existence. All that which Mitford tells you of H's book is rhodomontade, only H. has written unguardedly about me, and nothing makes a man more foolish than his own foolish panegyric. But I am pretty well used to flattery, and its contrary. Neither affects me a turnip's worth. Do you see the author of May you Like it? do you write to him? Will you give my present plea to him of ill health for not acknowledging a pretty Book with a pretty frontispiece he sent me. He is most esteem'd by me. As for subscribing to Books, in plain truth I am a man of reduced income, and don't allow myself 12 shillings a-year to buy Old Books with, which must be my Excuse. I am truly sorry for Murray's demur, but I wash my hands of all booksellers, and hope to know them no more. I am sick and poorly, and must leave off, with our joint kind remembrances to your daughter and friend A. K.



Edward Irving, from an engraving by Thomson, after the picture by Hoffman.

CCCCXLV. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Enfield.

Dear A.,—I am better. Mary quite well. We expected to see you before. I can't write long letters. So a friendly love to you all.

Yours ever,

C. L.

This Sunshine is healing.

CCCCXLVI. TO WILLIAM HONE

Enfield, Wednesday.
May 2, 1828.

Dear H.,—Valter Vilson dines with us to-morrow. Vell! How I should like to see Hone!

C. LAMB.

Mr Hone,
22, Belvidere Place,
near the Obelisk, Southwark.

CCCCXLVII. TO EDWARD MOXON

Enfield,
May 3rd, 1828.

Dear M.,—My friend Patmore, author of the *Months*, a very pretty publication,—of sundry Essays in the *London*, *New Monthly*, &c., wants to dispose of a volume or two of "Tales." Perhaps they might chance to suit Hurst; but be that as it may, he will call upon you *under favour of my recommendation*; and as he is returning to France, where he lives, if you can do any thing for him in the Treaty line, to save him dancing over the Channel every week, I am sure you will. I said I'd never trouble you again; but how vain are the resolves of mortal man! P. is a very hearty, friendly fellow, and was

poor John Scott's second, as I will be yours when you want one. May you never be mine!

Yours truly,

C. L.

Mr Moxon,
Messrs Hurst & Co., Booksellers,
St Paul's Churchyard.

CCCCXLVIII. TO REV. HENRY F. CARY

June 10th, 1828.

Dear Sir,—I long to see Wordsworth once more before he goes hence, but it would be at the expence of health and comfort my infirmities cannot afford. Once only I have been at a dinner party, to meet him, for a whole year past, and I do not know that I am not the worse for it now. There is a necessity for my drinking too much (don't show this to the Bishop of ——, your friend) at and after dinner; then I require spirits at night to allay the crudity of the weaker Bacchus; and in the morning I cool my parched stomach with a fiery libation. Then I am aground in town, and call upon my London friends, and get new wets of ale, porter, &c.; then ride home, drinking where the coach stops, as duly as Edward set up his Waltham Crosses. This, or near it, was the process of my experiment of dining at Talfourd's to meet Wordsworth, and I am not well now. Now let me beg that we may meet here with assured safety to both sides. Darley and Procter come here on Sunday morning; pray arrange to come along with them. Here I can be tolerably moderate. In town, the very air of town turns my head and is intoxication enough, if intoxication knew a limit. I am a poor country mouse, and your cates disturb me. Tell me you will come. We have a bed, and a half or three quarters bed, at all your services; and the adjoining

inn has many. If engaged on Sunday, tell me when you will come; a Saturday will suit as well. I would that Wordsworth would come too. Pray believe that 'tis my health only, which brought me here, that frightens me from the wicked town. Mary joins in kind remembrances to Mrs Cary and yourself.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCCCXLIX. TO MRS BASIL MONTAGU

[1828.]

Dear Madam,—I return your list with my name. I should be sorry that any respect should be going on towards Clarkson, and I be left out of the conspiracy. Otherwise I frankly own that to pillarize a man's good feelings in his lifetime is not to my taste. Monuments to goodness, even after death, are equivocal. I turn away from Howard's, I scarce know why. Goodness blows no trumpet, nor desires to have it blown. *We should be modest for a modest man*—as he is for himself. The vanities of life—art, poetry, skill military—are subjects for trophies; not the silent thoughts arising in a good man's mind in lonely places. Was I Clarkson, I should never be able to walk or ride near the spot again. Instead of bread, we are giving him a stone. Instead of the locality recalling the noblest moment of his existence, it is a place at which his friends (that is, himself) blow to the world, "What a good man is he!" I sat down upon a hillock at Forty Hill yesternight,—a fine contemplative evening,—with a thousand good speculations about mankind. How I yearned with cheap benevolence! I shall go and inquire of the stone-cutter, that cuts the tombstones here, what a stone with a short inscription will cost; just to say, "Here C. Lamb loved his brethren of mankind." Every body will come

there to love. As I can't well put my own name, I shall put about a subscription:

Mrs —— . .	£0	5	0	
Procter . . .	0	2	6	
G. Dyer. . .	0	1	0	
Mr Godwin .	0	0	0	
Mrs Godwin .	0	0	0	
Mr Irving . .				a watch-chain.
Mr —— . .				the proceeds of — first edition.
	£0	8	6	

I scribble in haste from here, where we shall be some time. Pray request Mr —— to advance the guinea for me, which shall faithfully be forthcoming, and pardon me that I don't see the proposal in quite the light that he may. The kindness of his motives, and his power of appreciating the noble passage, I thoroughly agree in.

With most kind regards to him, I conclude,

Dear madam, yours truly,

C. LAMB.

From Mrs Leishman's, Chase, Enfield.

CCCCL. TO BENJAMIN R. HAYDON

August, 1828.

Dear Haydon,—I have been tardy in telling you that your Chairing the Member gave me great pleasure—'tis true broad Hogarthian fun, the High Sheriff capital. Considering, too, that you had the materials imposed upon you, and that you did not select them from the rude world as H. did, I hope to see many more such from your hand. If the former picture went beyond this I have had a loss, and the King a bargain. I longed to rub the back of my hand across the hearty canvas that two senses might be gratified. Perhaps the subject is a little discordantly placed opposite to another act of Chairing,

where the huzzas were Hosannahs! but I was pleased to see so many of my old acquaintances brought together notwithstanding.

Believe me, yours truly,

C. LAMB.

CCCCLI. TO BERNARD BARTON

Saturday, Oct. 11th, 1828.

A splendid edition of Bunyan's Pilgrim—why, the thought is enough to turn one's moral stomach. His cockle-hat and staff transformed to a smart cocked beaver and a jemmy cane, his amice grey, to the last Regent Street cut, and his painful Palmer's pace to the modern swagger. Stop thy friend's sacrilegious hand. Nothing can be done for B. but to reprint the old cuts in as homely but good a style as possible. The Vanity Fair and the pilgrims there—the silly soothness in his setting-out countenances, the Christian idiocy (in a good sense) of his admiration of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains, the Lions so truly Allegorical, and remote from any similitude to Pidcock's. The great head (the author's), capacious of dreams and similitudes, dreaming in the dungeon. Perhaps you don't know my edition, what I had when a child—if you do, can you bear new designs from Martin, enamel'd into copper or silver plate by Heath—accompanied with verses from Mrs Heman's pen—O how unlike his own—

"Wouldst thou divert thyself from melancholy?
Wouldst thou be pleasant, yet be far from folly?
Wouldst thou read riddles and their explanation?
Or else be drowned in thy contemplation?
Dost thou love picking meat? or wouldst thou see
A man i' th' clouds, and hear him speak to thee?
Wouldst thou be in a dream, and yet not sleep?
Or wouldst thou in a moment laugh and weep?
Or wouldst thou lose thyself, and catch no harm,
And find thyself again without a charm?
Wouldst read *thyself*, and read thou knowst not what,
And yet know whether thou are blest or not

By reading the same lines? O then come hither,
And lay my book, thy head and heart together.

JOHN BUNYAN.

Show me such poetry in any one of the 15 forthcoming combinations of show and emptiness, yclept Annuals. (Let me whisper in your ear that wholesome sacramental bread is not more nutritious than papis-tical wafer stuff, than these, to head and heart, exceed the visual frippery of Mitford's Salamander God, baking himself up to the work of creation in a solar oven, not yet by the terms of the context itself existing: Blake's ravings made genteel.) So there's verses for thy verses. And now let me tell you that the sight of your hand gladden'd me. I have been daily trying to write to you, but paralysed. You have spurd me on this tiny effort, and at intervals I hope to hear from and talk to you. But my spirits have been in an opprest way for a long long time, and they are things which must be to you of faith, for who can explain depression?—Yes, I am hooked into the Gem, but only for some lines written on a dead infant of the Editor's, which being as it were his property, I could not refuse their appearing. But I hate the paper, the type, the gloss, the dandy plates, the names of contributors poked up into your eyes on first page, and whistled thro' all the covers of magazines, the barefaced sort of emulation, the immodest candidateship—brought into so little space. In those old "Londons," a signature was lost in the wood of matter—the paper coarse (till latterly, which spoil'd them)—in short I detest to appear in an Annual. What a fertile genius (and a quiet good soul withal) is Hood. He has fifty things in hand, farces to supply the Adelphi for the season, a comedy for one of the great theatres, just ready, a whole entertainment by himself, for Mathews and Yates to figure in, a meditated Comic Annual for next year, to be nearly done by himself. You'd like him very much. Wordsworth I see has

a good many pieces announced in one of 'em, not our gem. W. Scott has distributed himself like a bribe haunch among 'em. Of all the poets, Cary has had the good sense to keep quite clear of 'em, with Clergy-gentle-manly right notions. Don't think I set up for being proud on this point, I like a bit of flattery tickling my vanity, as well as any one. But these pompous masquerades without masks (naked names or faces) I hate. So there's a bit of my mind. Besides they infallibly cheat you, I mean the booksellers. If I get but a copy, I only expect it from Hood's being my friend. Coleridge has lately been here. He too is deep among the Prophets—the Year-servers,—the mob of Gentlemen annuals. But they'll cheat him, I know.

And now, dear B. B., the sun shining out merrily and the dirty clouds we had yesterday having wash'd their own faces clean with their own rain, tempts me to wander up Winchmore Hill, or into some of the delightful vicinages of Enfield, which I hope to show you at some time when you can get a few days up to the great Town. Believe me it would give both of us great pleasure to show you all three (we can lodge you) our pleasant farms and villages.

We both join in kindest loves to you and yours.

CH. LAMB, *redivivus.*

CCCCLII. TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

Dear Clarke,—We did expect to see you with Victoria and the Novellos before this, and do not quite understand why we have not. Mrs N. and V. [Vincent] promised us after the York expedition; a day being named before, which fail'd. 'Tis not too late. The autumn leaves drop gold, and Enfield is beautifuller—to a common eye—than when you lurked at the Greyhound. Benedicks are close, but how I so

totally missed you at that time, going for my morning cup of ale daily, is a mystery. 'Twas stealing a match before one's face in earnest. But certainly we had not a dream of your appropinquity. I instantly prepared an Epithalamium, in the form of a Sonata—which I was sending to Novello to compose—but Mary forbid it me, as too light for the occasion—as if the subject required anything heavy—so in a tiff with her, I sent no congratulation at all. Tho' I promise you the wedding was very pleasant news to me indeed. Let your reply name a day this next week, when you will come as many as a coach will hold; such a day as we had at Dulwich. My very kindest love and Mary's to Victoria and the Novellos. The enclosed is from a friend nameless, but highish in office, and a man whose accuracy of statement may be relied on with implicit confidence. He wants the *exposé* to appear in a newspaper as the "greatest piece of legal and Parliamentary villainy he ever remembered," and he has had experience in both; and thinks it would answer afterwards in a cheap pamphlet printed at Lambeth in 8o sheet, as 16,000 families in that parish are interested. I know not whether the present *Examiner* keeps up the character of exposing abuses, for I scarce see a paper now. If so, you may ascertain Mr Hunt of the strictest truth of the statement, at the peril of my head. But if this won't do, transmit it me back, I beg, per coach, or better, bring it with you.

Yours unaltered,

C. LAMB.

CCCCLIII. TO LAMAN BLANCHARD

Enfield, November 9, 1828.

Sir,—I beg to return my acknowledgments for the present of your elegant volume, which I should have esteemed, without the bribe of the name prefixed to it. I have been much pleased with it throughout,

S. Laman Blanchard, from an engraving by S. Freeman, after a drawing by D. Maclise, R.A.

but am most taken with the peculiar delicacy of some of the sonnets. I shall put them up among my poetical treasures.

Your obliged Servant,

C. Lamb.

CCCCLIV. TO BERNARD BARTON

Dec. 5th, 1828.

Dear B. B.,—I am ashamed to receive so many nice Books from you, and to have none to send you in return. You are always sending me some fruits or wholesome potherbs, and mine is the garden of the Sluggard—nothing but weeds, or scarce they. Nevertheless if I knew how to transmit it, I would send you Blackwood's of this month, which contains a little Drama, to have your opinion of it, and how far I have improved, or otherwise, upon its prototype. Thank you for your kind Sonnet. It does me good to see the Dedication to a Christian Bishop. I am for a Comprehension, as Divines call it, but so as that the Church shall go a good deal more than half way over to the Silent Meeting-house. I have ever said that the Quakers are the only *Professors* of Christianity as I read it in the Evangiles. I say *Professors*; marry, as to practice, with their gaudy hot types and poetical vanities, they are much at one with the sinful. Martin's Frontispiece is a very fine thing, let *C. L.* say what he please to the contrary. Of the Poems, I like them as a volume better than any one of the preceding; particularly, "Power and Gentleness"; "The Present"; "Lady Russell"—with the exception that I do not like the noble act of Curtius, true or false, one of [the] grand foundations of the old Roman patriotism, to be sacrificed to Lady R.'s taking notes on her husband's trial. If a thing is good, why invidiously bring it into light with something better? There are too few heroic things in this world to admit of our marshalling

them in anxious etiquettes of precedence. Would you make a poem on the Story of Ruth, (pretty story!) and then say, Aye, but how much better is the story of Joseph and his brethren! To go on, the Stanzas to Chalon want the *name* of Clarkson in the body of them; it is left to inference. The Battle of Gibeon is spirited again—but you sacrifice it in last stanza to the Song at Bethlehem. Is it quite orthodox to do so? The first was good, you suppose, for that dispensation. Why set the word against the word? It puzzles a weak Christian. So Watts's Psalms are an implied censure on David's. But as long as the Bible is supposed to be an equally divine Emanation with the Testament, so long it will stagger weaklings to have them set in opposition. Godiva is delicately touch'd. I have always thought it a beautiful story characteristic of old English times. But I could not help amusing myself with the thought —if Martin had chosen this subject for a frontispiece —there would have been in some dark corner a white Lady, white as the walker on the waves, riding upon some mystical quadruped—and high above would have risen "tower above tower a massy structure high" the Tenterden steeples of Coventry, till the poor Cross would scarce have known itself among the clouds, and far above them all, the distant Clint hills peering over chimney-pots, piled up Ossa-on-Olympus fashion, till the admiring Spectator (admirer of a noble deed) might have gone look for the Lady, as you must hunt for the other in the Lobster. But M. should be made Royal architect. What palaces he would pile—but then what parliamentary grants to make them good! Ne'ertheless I like the frontispiece —The Elephant is pleasant; and I am glad you are getting into a wider scope of subjects. There may be too much, not religion, but too many *good words* in a book, till it becomes, as Sh. says of religion, a rhapsody of words. I will just name, that you have

brought in the Song to the Shepherds in four or five, if not six places. Now this is not good economy. The Enoch is fine; and here I can sacrifice Elijah to it, because 'tis illustrative only, and not disparaging of the latter prophet's departure. I like this best in the Book. Lastly, I much like the Heron, 'tis exquisite. Know you Lord Thurlow's Sonnet to a Bird of that sort on Lacken water? if not, 'tis indispensable I send it you, with my Blackwood, if you tell me how best to send them. Fludyer is pleasant, —you are getting gay and Hoodish. What is the Enigma? money—if not, I fairly confess I am foiled, and sphynx must . . . (4 times I've tried to write eat me)—eat me—and the blotting pen turns it into cat me. And now I will take my leave with saying, I esteem thy verses, like thy present, honour thy frontispicer, and right-reverence thy Patron and Dedicatee, and am dear B. B.,

Yours heartily,

C. L.

Our joint kindest Loves to A. K. and your Daughter.

CCCCLV. TO EDWARD MOXON

[Dec. 1828.]

Dear M.,—As I see no blood marks on the Green Lanes road, I conclude you got in safe skins home. Have you thought of enquiring Miss Wilson's change of abode? Of the two copies of my Drama I want one sent to Wordsworth, together with a complete copy of Hone's Table Book, for which I shall be your debtor till we meet. Perhaps Longmans will take charge of this parcel. The other is for Coleridge, at Mr Gilman's, Grove, Highgate, which may be sent, or, if you have a curiosity to see him, you will make an errand with it to him, and tell him we mean very

soon to come and see him, if the Gilmans can give or get us a bed. I am ashamed to be so troublesome. Pray let Hood see the *Eclectic Review*—a rogue!

Yours truly,
C. L.

The two parts of the Blackwood you may make waste paper of.

CCCCLVI. TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

My Dear Three C's,—The way from Southgate to Colney Hatch thro' the unfrequentedest Blackberry paths that ever concealed their coy bunches from a truant Citizen, we have accidentally fallen upon—the giant Tree by Cheshunt we have missed, but keep your chart to go by, unless you will be our conduct —at present I am disabled from further flights than just to skirt round Clay Hill, with a peep at the fine back woods, by strained tendons, got by skipping a skipping rope at 53—*hei mihi, non sum qualis*—but do you know, now you come to talk of walks, a ramble of four hours or so—there and back—to the willow and lavender plantations at the south corner of Northaw Church by a well dedicated to Saint Claridge, with the clumps of finest moss rising hillock fashion, which I counted to the number of two hundred and sixty, and are called "Claridge's covers"—the tradition being that that saint entertained so many angels or hermits there, upon occasion of blessing the waters? The legends have set down the fruits spread upon that occasion, and in the Black Book of St Alban's some are named which are not supposed to have been introduced into this island till a century later. But waiving the miracle, a sweeter spot is not in ten counties round; you are knee deep in clover, that is

to say, if you are not above a middling man's height —from this paradise, making a day of it, you go to see the ruins of an old convent at March Hall, where some of the painted glass is yet whole and fresh.

If you do not know this, you do not know the capabilities of this country, you may be said to be a stranger to Enfield. I found it out one morning in October, and so delighted was I that I did not get home before dark, well a-paid.

I shall long to show you the clump meadows, as they are called; we might do that, without reaching March Hall—when the days are longer, we might take both, and come home by Forest Cross, so skirt over Pennington and the cheerful little village of Churchley to Forty Hill.

But these are dreams till summer; meanwhile we should be most glad to see you for a lesser excursion —say, Sunday next, you and *another*, or if more, best on a week-day with a notice, but o' Sundays, as far as a leg of mutton goes, most welcome. We can squeeze out a bed. Edmonton coaches run every hour, and my pen has run out its quarter. Heartily farewell.

CCCCLVII. TO SARAH JAMES

[Dec. 31, 1828.]

We have just got your letter. I think Mother Reynolds will go on quietly, Mrs Scrimpshaw having kittens. The name of the late Laureat was Henry James Pye, and when his 1st Birthday Ode came out, which was very poor, somebody being ask'd his opinion of it said—

> And when the Pye was open'd,
> The birds began to sing,
> And was not this a dainty dish,
> To set before the King?

Pye was brother to old Major Pye, and father to Mrs Arnold, and uncle to a General Pye, all friends of Miss Kelly. Pye succeeded Thos. Weston, Weston succeeded Wm. Whitehead, Whitehead succeeded Colly Cibber, Cibber succeeded Eusden, Eusden succeeded Thos. Shadwell, Shadwell succeeded Dryden, Dryden succeeded Davenant, Davenant succeeded God knows whom. There never was a Rogers a Poet Laureat, there is an old living Poet of that name, a Banker, as you know, author of the Pleasures of Memory, where Moxon goes to breakfast in a fine house in the Green Park, but he was never Laureat. Southey is the present one, and for anything I know or care Moxon may succeed him. We have a copy of "Christmas" for you, so you may give your own to Mary as soon as you please. We think you need not have exhibited your mountain shyness before Mr B. He is neither shy himself, nor patronizes it in others. So with many thanks Good Bye. Emma comes on Thursday. C. L.

The Poet Laureat whom Davenant succeeded was Rare Ben Jonson, who I believe was the first regular Laureat with the appointment of £100 a year and a Butt of Sack or Canary. So add that to my little list.

C. L.

[*Endorsed*]

Miss James,
20, Upper Charles Street,
Goswell Street Road.

CCCCLVIII. TO EDWARD MOXON

No date. [About 1828.]

Dear Moxon,—Much thanks for the books. Hood is excellent. Mr Westwood, who wishes to consult you about his son, will acquaint you with our change of life. Mary's very bad spirits drove me upon it, and it seems to answer admirably. We

shall be happy to see you at our table and hole; say, the *Sunday after next.*

Yours very truly,

C. L.

Edward Moxon, Esq.,
Messrs Hurst & Co.,
65, St Paul's Churchyard.

CCCCLIX. TO WILLIAM HONE

[No date.]

Dear H.,—I don't know by your letter whether you are resident at Newington Green, nor at *what number*. So I discharge this, as a surer shot, at Russell Court. Your almanack is funny; it only disappointed me as being not an almanack. What a one you might make! embracing a real calendar, with astrological ridicule, predictions like Tom Brown's "for every day in the week." The only information I receive from this is that New Year's Day happened this year on the 1st of January. I do not see the days even set down on which I ought to go to church, the Dominical Letter: fie! I will only add that Enfield is still here, with its accustomed shoulders of mutton, fine Geneva tipple, &c.

So hoping sometime for a fine day's walk with you, I rest, C. L.

Mary's love to both of you.

Mr Hone,
29, Russell Court,
Brydges Street, Covent Garden.

CCCCLX. TO BRYAN W. PROCTER

Jan. 19th, 1829.

My dear Procter,—I am ashamed not to have taken the drift of your pleasant letter, which I find to have been pure invention; but jokes are not suspected in

Bœotian Enfield. We are plain people, and our talk is of corn and cattle and Waltham markets. Besides, I was a little out of sorts when I received it. The fact is, I am involved in a case which has fretted me to death, and I have no reliance except on you to extricate me. I am sure you will give me your best legal advice, having no professional friend besides but Robinson and Talfourd, with neither of whom, at present, I am on the best of terms. My brother's widow left a will, made during the lifetime of my brother, in which I am named sole executor, by which she bequeathes forty acres of arable property, which it seems she held under covert baron, unknown to my brother, to the heirs of the body of Elizabeth Dowden, her married daughter by a first husband, in fee simple, recoverable by fine; invested property, mind, for there is the difficulty; subject to leet and quit-rent; in short, worded in the most guarded terms, to shut out the property from Isaac Dowden, the husband. Intelligence has just come of the death of this person in India, where he made a will, entailing this property (which seemed entangled enough already) to the heirs of his body that should not be born of his wife; for it seems by the law in India, natural children can recover. They have put the cause into Exchequer process here, removed by *certiorari* from the native courts; and the question is, whether I should, as executor, try the cause here, or again re-remove it to the Supreme Sessions at Bangalore, which I understand I can, or plead a hearing before the Privy Council here. As it involves all the little property of Elizabeth Dowden, I am anxious to take the fittest steps, and what may be least expensive. For God's sake assist me, for the case is so embarrassed that it deprives me of sleep and appetite. M. Burney thinks there is a case like it in chap. 170, sec. 5, in "Fearn's Contingent Remainders." Pray read it over with him dispassionately, and let me have the result. The

complexity lies in the questionable power of the husband to alienate *in usum* enfeoffments whereof he was only collaterally seized, &c.

I had another favour to beg, which is the beggarliest of beggings: a few lines of verse for a young friend's album (six will be enough). M. Burney will tell you who she is I want 'em for. A girl of gold. Six lines—make 'em eight—signed Barry C. They need not be very good, as I chiefly want 'em as a foil to mine. But I shall be seriously obliged by any refuse scrap. We are in the last ages of the world, when St Paul prophesied that women should be "headstrong, lovers of their own wills, having albums." I fled hither to escape the albumean persecution, and had not been in my new house twenty-four hours when the daughter of the next house came in with a friend's album to beg a contribution, and the following day intimated she had one of her own. Two more have sprung up since. "If I take the wings of the morning" and fly unto the uttermost parts of the earth, there will albums be. New Holland has albums. But the age is to be complied with. M. B. will tell you the sort of girl I request the ten lines for. Somewhat of a pensive cast, what you admire. The lines may come before the law question, as that cannot be determined before Hilary Term, and I wish your deliberate judgment on that. The other may be flimsy and superficial. And if you have not burnt your returned letter, pray resend it me, as a monumental token of my stupidity. 'Twas a little unthinking of you to touch upon a sore subject. Why, by dabbling in those accursed Annuals I have become a by-word of infamy all over the kingdom. I have sicken'd decent women for asking me to write in albums. There be dark "jests" abroad, Master Cornwall, and some riddles may live to be cleared up. And 'tisn't every saddle is put on the right steed. And forgeries and false Gospels are not peculiar

to the age following the Apostles. And some tubs don't stand on their right bottom, which is all I wish to say in these ticklish times; and so your servant,

CH. LAMB.

CCCCLXI. TO THE SAME

Jan. 22nd, 1829.

Don't trouble yourself about the verses. Take 'em coolly as they come. Any day between this and Midsummer will do. Ten lines the extreme. There is no mystery in my incognita. She has often seen you, though you may not have observed a silent brown girl, who for the last twelve years has rambled about our house in her Christmas holidays. She is Italian by name and extraction. Ten lines about the blue sky of her country will do, as 'tis her foible to be proud of it.—Item: I have made her a tolerable Latinist. She is called Emma Isola. I shall, I think, be in town in a few weeks, when I will assuredly see you. I will put in here loves to Mrs Procter and the anti-Capulets, because Mary tells me I omitted them in my last. I like to see my friends here. I have put my law-suit into the hands of an Enfield practitioner, a plain man, who seems perfectly to understand it, and gives me hopes of a favourable result.

Rumour tells us that Miss Holcroft is married. Who is Badman, or Bed'em? Have I seen him at Montague's? I hear he is a great chemist. I am sometimes chemical myself. A thought strikes me with horror. Pray heaven he may not have done it for the sake of trying chemical experiments upon her,—young female subjects are so scarce. Louisa would make a capital shot. Arn't you glad about Burke's case? We may set off the Scotch murders against the Scotch novels: Hare, the Great Unchanged!

M. B. is richly worth your knowing. He is on the top scale of my friendship ladder, on which an angel or two is still climbing, and some, alas! descending. Did you see a sonnet of mine in Blackwood's last? Curious construction! Elaborata facilitas! And now I'll tell. 'Twas written for the *Gem*, but the editors declined it, on the plea that it would *shock all mothers*; so they published "The Widow," instead. I am born out of time. I have no conjecture about what the present world calls delicacy. I thought "Rosamund Gray" was a pretty modest thing. Hessey assures me that the world would not bear it. I have lived to grow into an indecent character. When my sonnet was rejected, I exclaimed, "Damn the age! I will write for antiquity."

Erratum in Sonnet:—Last line but something, for "tender" read *tend*. The Scotch do not know our law terms; but I find some remains of honest, plain, old writing lurking there still. They were not so mealy-mouthed as to refuse my verses. Maybe 'tis their oatmeal.

Blackwood sent me £20 for the drama. Somebody cheated me out of it next day; and my new pair of breeches, just sent home, cracking at first putting on, I exclaimed, in my wrath, "All tailors are cheats, and all men are tailors." Then I was better. C. L.

CCCCLXII. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Dear Allsop,—Old Star is setting. Take him and cut him into Little Stars. Nevertheless, the extinction of the greater light is not by the lesser light (Stella, or Mrs Star) apprehended so nigh, but that she will be thankful if you can let young Scintillation (Master Star) twinkle down by the coach on Sunday to catch the last glimmer of the decaying parental light. No

news is good news, so we conclude Mrs A. and little A. are doing well. Our kindest loves.

C. L.

CCCCLXIII. TO BRYAN W. PROCTER

Jan. 29th, 1829.

When Miss Ouldcroft (who is now Mrs Beddam, and Bed—damn'd to her) was at Enfield, which she was in Summer time, and owed her health to its sun and genial influences, she visited (with young lady-like impertinence) a poor man's cottage that had a pretty baby, (O the yearning!) gave it fine caps and sweetmeats. On a day, broke into the parlour our two maids uproarious. "O ma'am, who do you think Miss Ouldcroft (they pronounce it Holcroft) has been working a cap for?" "A child," answered Mary, in true Shandean female simplicity. "'Tis the man's child as was taken up for sheep-stealing." Miss Ouldcroft was staggered, and would have cut the connection, but by main force I made her go and take her leave of her protégée. I thought, if she went no more, the Abactor or Abactor's wife (vide Ainsworth) would suppose she had heard something; and I have delicacy for a sheep-stealer. The overseers actually overhauled a mutton pie at the baker's (his first, last, and only hope of mutton pie,) which he never came to eat, and thence inferred his guilt. Per occasionem cujus, I framed the sonnet; observe its elaborate construction. I was four days about it.

THE GIPSY'S MALISON

"Suck, baby, suck! mother's love grows by giving,
  Drain the sweet founts that only thrive by wasting;
Black manhood comes, when riotous guilty living
  Hands thee the cup that shall be death in tasting.
Kiss, baby, kiss! mother's lips shine by kisses,
  Choke the warm breath that else would fall in blessings;
Black manhood comes, when turbulent guilty blisses

Tend thee the kiss that poisons 'mid caressings.
Hang, baby, hang! mother's love loves such forces,
Strain the fond neck that bends still to thy clinging;
Black manhood comes, when violent lawless courses
Leave thee a spectacle in rude air swinging."
So sang a wither'd beldam energetical,
And bann'd the ungiving door with lips prophetical.

Barry, study that sonnet. It is curiously and perversely elaborate. 'Tis a choking subject, and therefore the reader is directed to the structure of it. See you! and was this a fourteener to be rejected by a trumpery annual? Forsooth, 'twould shock all mothers; and may all mothers, who would so be shocked, be damn'd! as if mothers were such sort of logicians as to infer the future hanging of *their* child from the theoretical hangibility (or capacity of being hanged, if the judge pleases) of every infant born with a neck on. Oh B. C. my whole heart is faint, and my whole head is sick (how is it?) at this damn'd canting unmasculine age!

CCCCLXIV. TO THE SAME

[1829.]

The comings in of an incipient conveyancer are not adequate to the receipt of three twopenny post nonpaids in a week. Therefore, after this, I condemn my stub to long and deep silence, or shall awaken it to write to lords. Lest those raptures in this honeymoon of my correspondence, which you avow for the gentle person of my Nuncio, after passing through certain natural grades, as Love, Love and Water, Love with the chill off, then subsiding to that point which the heroic suitor of his wedded dame, the noble-spirited Lord Randolph in the play, declares to be the ambition of his passion, a reciprocation of "complacent kindness,"—should suddenly plump down (scarce staying to bait at the mid point of indifference, so hungry it is for distaste) to a loathing and blank

aversion, to the rendering probable such counter expressions as this—"Damn that infernal two-penny postman," (words which make the not yet glutted inamorato "lift up his hands and wonder who can use them.") While, then, you are not ruined, let me assure thee, O thou above the painter, and next only under Giraldus Cambrensis, the most immortal and worthy to be immortal Barry, thy most ingenious and golden cadences do take my fancy mightily. They are at this identical moment under the hands and the paste of the fairest hands (bating chilblains) in Cambridge, soon to be transplanted to Suffolk, to the envy of half of the young ladies in Bury. But tell me, and tell me truly, gentle swain, is that Isola Bella a true spot in geographical denomination, or a floating Delos in thy brain? Lurks that fair island in verity in the bosom of Lake Maggiore, or some other with less poetic name, which thou hast Cornwallized for the occasion. And what if Maggiore itself be but a coinage of adaptation? Of this, pray resolve me immediately, for my albumess will be catechised on this subject; and how can I prompt her? Lake Leman I know, and Lemon Lake (in a punch bowl) I have swum in, though those lymphs be long since dry. But Maggiore may be in the moon. Unsphinx this riddle for me, for my shelves have no gazetteer. And mayest thou never murder thy father-in-law in the Trivia of Lincoln's Inn New Square Passage, nor afterwards make absurd proposals to the Widow M[ontague]. But I know you abhor any such notions. Nevertheless so did O-Edipus (as Admiral Burney used to call him, splitting he diphthong in spite or ignorance) for that matter.

C. L.

CCCCLXV. TO THOMAS HOOD

[No date.]

Dear Lamb,—You are an impudent varlet; but I

Thomas Hood,
from an engraving by H. W. Smith.

will keep your secret. We dine at Ayrton's on Thursday, and shall try to find Sarah and her two spare beds for that night only. Miss M. and her tragedy may be dished: so may *not* you and your rib. Health attend you.

Yours, T. Hood, Esq.

Enfield.

Miss Bridget Hood sends love.

CCCCLXVI. TO BRYAN W. PROCTER

Feb. 2nd, 1829

Facundissime Poeta! quanquam istiusmodi epitheta oratoribus potiùs quam poetis attinere facilè scio—tamen, facundissime!

Commoratur nobiscum jamdiu, in agro Enfeldiense, scilicet, leguleius futurus, illustrissimus Martinus Burneius, otium agens, negotia nominalia, et officinam clientum vacuam, paululum fugiens. Orat, implorat te—nempe, Martinus—ut si (quòd Dii faciant) fortè fortunâ, absente ipso, advenerit tardus cliens, eum certiorem feceris per literas hûc missas. Intelligisne? an me Anglicè et barbarice ad te hominem perdoctum scribere oportet? C. Agnus.

Si status de franco tenemento datur avo, et in eodem facto si mediate vel immediate datur *hæredibus vel hæredibus corporis dicti avi*, postrema hæc verba sunt Limitationis non Perquisitionis.

Dixi. Carlagnulus.

CCCCLXVII. TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

Enfield, Feb. 27th, 1829.

Dear R.,—Expectation was alert on the receipt of your strange-shaped present, while yet undisclosed from its fusc envelope. Some said, 'tis a *viol da Gamba*, others pronounced it a fiddle; I, myself,

hoped it a liqueur case, pregnant with *eau-de-vie* and such odd nectar. When midwifed into daylight, the gossips were at a loss to pronounce upon its species. Most took it for a marrow spoon, an apple scoop, a banker's guinea shovel; at length its true scope appeared, its drift, to save the back-bone of my sister stooping to scuttles: a philanthropic intent; borrowed, no doubt, from some of the Colliers. You save people's backs one way, and break 'em again by loads of obligation. The spectacles are delicate and Vulcanian. No lighter texture than their steel did the cuckoldy blacksmith frame to catch Mrs Vulcan and the Captain in. For ungalled forehead, as for back unbursten, you have Mary's thanks. Marry, for my own peculium of obligation, 'twas supererogatory. A second part of Pamela was enough in conscience. Two Pamelas in a house are too much, without two Mr B.'s to reward 'em.

Mary, who is handselling her new aerial perspectives upon a pair of old worsted stockings trod out in Cheshunt lanes, sends her love: I, great good-liking. Bid us a personal farewell before you see the Vatican. CHARLES LAMB.

CCCCLXVIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

March 25th, 1829.

Dear B. B.,—I send you by desire Darley's very poetical poem. You will like, I think, the novel headings of each scene. Scenical directions in verse are novelties. With it I send a few *duplicates* which are *therefore* no value to me; and may amuse an idle hour. Read "Christmas," 'tis the production of a young author, who reads all your writings. A good word from you about his little book would be as balm to him. It has no pretensions, and makes none. But parts are pretty. In "Field's Appendix" turn to a Poem called the Kangaroo. It is in the best way of

our old poets, if I mistake not. I have just come from Town, where I have been to get my bit of quarterly pension. And have brought home, from stalls in Barbican, the old Pilgrim's Progress with the prints—Vanity Fair, &c.—now scarce. Four shillings. Cheap. And also one of whom I have oft heard and had dreams, but never saw in the flesh—that is in sheepskin—The whole theologic works of

Thomas Aquinas!

My arms ached with lugging it a mile to the stage, but the burden was a pleasure, such as old Anchises was to the shoulders of Æneas—or the Lady to the Lover in old romance, who having to carry her to the top of a high mountain—the price of obtaining her—clamber'd with her to the top, and fell dead with fatigue.

O the glorious old Schoolmen!

There must be something in him. Such great names imply greatness. Who hath seen Michael Angelo's things—of us that never pilgrimaged to Rome—and yet which of us disbelieves his greatness. How I will revel in his cobwebs and subtleties, till my brain spins!

N.B. I have writ in the old Hamlet, offer it to Mitford in my name, if he have not seen it. 'Tis woefully below our editions of it. But keep it, if you like (What is M. to me?)

I do not mean this to go for a letter, only to apprise you that the parcel is booked for you this 25th March, 1829, from the Four Swans, Bishopsgate. With both our loves to Lucy and A. K. Yours ever, C. L.

CCCCLXIX. TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

April 10th, 1829.

Dear Robinson,—We are afraid you will slip from

us from England without again seeing us. It would be charity to come and see me. I have these three days been laid up with strong rheumatic pains, in loins, back, shoulders. I shriek sometimes from the violence of them. I get scarce any sleep, and the consequence is, I am restless, and want to change sides as I lie, and I cannot turn without resting on my hands, and so turning all my body all at once, like a log with a lever. While this rainy weather lasts, I have no hope of alleviation. I have tried flannels and embrocation in vain. Just at the hip joint the pangs sometimes are so excruciating, that I cry out. It is as violent as the cramp, and far more continuous. I am ashamed to whine about these complaints to you, who can ill enter into them; but indeed they are sharp. You go about, in rain or fine, at all hours, without discommodity. I envy you your immunity at a time of life not much removed from my own. But you owe your exemption to temperance, which it is too late for me to pursue. I, in my lifetime, have had my good things. Hence my frame is brittle—yours strong as brass. I never knew any ailment you had. You can go out at night in all weathers, sit up all hours. Well, I don't want to moralize; I only wish to say that if you are inclined to a game at double-dumby, I would try and bolster myself in a chair for a rubber or so. My days are tedious, but less so, and less painful than my nights. May you never know the pain and difficulty I have in writing so much! Mary, who is most kind, joins in the wish.

C. Lamb.

CCCCLXX. TO THE SAME

April 17, 1829.

I do confess to mischief. It was the subtlest diabolical piece of malice heart of man has contrived. I

have no more rheumatism than that poker. Never was freer from all pains and aches. Every joint sound, to the tip of the ear from the extremity of the lesser toe. The report of thy torments was blown circuitously here from Bury. I could not resist the jeer. I conceived you writhing when you should just receive my congratulations. How mad you'd be! Well, it is not in my method to inflict pangs. I leave that to Heaven: but in the existing pangs of a friend I have a share. His disquietude crowns my exemption. I imagine you howling, and pace across the room, shooting out my free arms, legs, &c., this way and that way, with an assurance of not kindling a spark of pain from them. I deny that Nature meant us to sympathize with agonies. Those face-contortions, retortions, distortions have the merriness of antics. Nature meant them for farce—not so pleasant to the actor, indeed; but Grimaldi cries when we laugh, and 'tis but one that suffers to make thousands rejoice.

You say that shampooing is ineffectual; but, *per se*, it is good, to show the introvolutions, extravolutions, of which the animal frame is capable—to show what the creature is receptible of, short of dissolution.

You are worst of nights, an't you? You never was rack'd, was you? I should like an authentic map of those feelings.

You seem to have the flying gout. You can scarcely screw a smile out of your face, can you? I sit at immunity and sneer *ad libitum*. 'Tis now the time for you to make good resolutions. I may go on breaking 'em for any thing the worse I find myself. Your doctor seems to keep you on the long cure. Precipitate healings are never good. Don't come while you are so bad; I shan't be able to attend to your throes and the dumby at once. I should like to know how slowly the pain goes off. But don't write,

unless the motion will be likely to make your sensibility more exquisite.

Your affectionate and truly healthy friend,

C. LAMB.

Mary thought a letter from me might amuse you in your torment.

CCCCLXXI. TO GEORGE DYER

Enfield, 29 April. [No year.]

Dear Dyer,—As well as a bad pen can do it, I must thank you for your friendly attention to the wishes of our young friend Emma, who was packing up for Bury when your sonnet arrived, and was too hurried to express her sense of its merits. I know she will treasure up that and your second communication among her choicest rarities, as from her grandfather's friend, whom not having seen, she loves to hear talked of; the second letter shall be sent after her, with our first parcel to Suffolk, where she is, to us, alas! dead and Bury'd: we sorely miss her. Should you at any hour think of four or six lines, to send her, addressed to herself simply, naming her grandsire, and to wish she may pass through life as much respected, with your own "G. Dyer" at the end, she would feel rich indeed, for the nature of an album asks for verses that have not been in print before; but this quite at your convenience: and to be less trouble to yourself, four lines would be sufficient. Enfield is come out in summer beauty. Come when you will, and we will give you a bed; Emma has left hers, you know.

I remain, my dear Dyer,
Your affectionate friend,
CHARLES LAMB.

CCCCLXXII. TO THOMAS HOOD

[No date.]

Dear Hood,—We will look out for you on Wednesday, be sure, tho' we have not eyes like Emma, who, when I made her sit with her back to the window to keep her to her Latin, literally saw round backwards every one that past, and, O, she were here to jump up and shriek out 'There are the Hoods!' We have had two pretty letters from her, which I long to show you—together with Enfield in her May beauty.

Loves to Jane.

[Here follow rough caricatures of Charles and his sister, and "I can't draw no better."]

CCCCLXXIII. TO WALTER WILSON

May 28, 1829.

Dear W.,—Introduce this, or omit it, as you like. I think I wrote better about it in a letter to you from India H. If you have that, perhaps out of the two I could patch up a better thing, if you'd return both. But I am very poorly, and have been harassed with an illness of my sister's.

The Ode was printed in the *New Times* nearly the end of 1825, and I have only omitted some silly lines, call it a corrected copy.

Yours ever,

C. LAMB.

Put my name to either, or both, as you like.

Walter Wilson, Esq.,
Burnett House,
Near Bath, Somersetshire.

CCCCLXXIV. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

June 10, 1829.

My dear Ayrton,

It grieves me that I cannot join you. Besides that I have two young friends in the house, I expect a London visitor on Thursday. I hope to see H. C. R. here before he goes—and you before we all go.

God bless you. Health to the Party. Love to Mrs A. C. LAMB.

CCCCLXXV. TO THE SAME

At midsummer, or soon after (I will let you know the previous day), I will take a day with you in the purlieus of my old haunts. No offence has been taken, any more than meant. My house is full at present, but empty of its chief pride. She is dead to me for many months. But when I see you, then I will say, Come and see me. With undiminished friendship to you both,

Your faithful, but queer,

C. L.

How you frighted me! Never write again, "Coleridge is dead," at the end of a line, and tamely come in with, "to his friends" at the beginning of another. Love is quicker, and fear from love, than the transition ocular from line to line.

CCCCLXXVI. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[1829.]

Dear Allsop,—I will find out your Bijoux some day. At present, I am sorry to say, we have neither of us very good spirits; and I cannot look to any pleasant expeditions.

You speak of your trial as a known thing, but I am quite in the dark about it; but wish you a safe issue most heartily.

Our loves to Mrs Allsop and children.

C. L.

CCCCLXXVII. TO BERNARD BARTON

July 3rd, 1829.

Dear B. B.,—I am very much grieved indeed for the indisposition of poor Lucy. Your letter found me in domestic troubles. My sister is again taken ill, and I am obliged to remove her out of the house for many weeks, I fear, before I can hope to have her again. I have been very desolate indeed. My loneliness is a little abated by our young friend Emma having just come here for her holidays, and a schoolfellow of hers that was, with her. Still the house is not the same, tho' she is the same. Mary had been pleasing herself with the prospect of seeing her at this time; and with all their company, the house feels at times a frightful solitude. May you and I in no very long time have a more cheerful theme to write about, and congratulate upon a daughter's and a sister's perfect recovery. Do not be long without telling me how Lucy goes on. I have a right to call her by her quaker-name, you know.

Emma knows that I am writing to you, and begs to be remembered to you with thankfulness for your ready contribution. Her album is filling apace. But of her contributors one, almost the flower of it, a most amiable young man and late acquaintance of mine, has been carried off by consumption, on return from one of the Azores islands, to which he went with hopes of mastering the disease, came back improved, went back to a most

close and confined counting-house, and relapsed. His name was Dibdin, grandson of the songster.

You will be glad to hear that Emma, tho' unknown to you, has given the highest satisfaction in her little place of governante in a Clergyman's family, which you may believe by the Parson and his Lady drinking poor Mary's health on her birthday, tho' they never saw her, merely because she was a friend of Emma's, and the vicar also sent me a brace of partridges.

To get out of home themes, have you seen Southey's Dialogues. His lake descriptions and the account of his Library at Keswick, are very fine. But he needed not to have called up the Ghost of More to hold the conversations with, which might as well have passed between A. and B, or Caius and Lucius. It is making too free with a defunct Chancellor and Martyr.

I feel as if I had nothing farther to write about—O! I forget the prettiest letter I ever read, that I have received from "Pleasures of Memory" Rogers in acknowledgment of a sonnet I sent him on the Loss of his Brother. It is too long to transcribe, but I hope to show it you some day, as I hope sometime again to see you, when all of us are well. Only it ends thus "We were nearly of an age (he was the elder). He was the only person in the world in whose eyes I always appeared young."

I will now take my leave with assuring you that I am most interested in hoping to hear favourable accounts from you. With kindest regards to A. K. and you, Yours truly, C. L.

CCCCLXXVIII. TO GEORGE DYER

[No Date.]

Dear Dyer,—My very good friend, and Charles Clarke's father-in-law, Vincent Novello, wishes to shake hands with you. Make him play you a tune.

He is a damn'd fine musician, and, what is better, a good man and true. He will tell you how glad we should be to have Mrs Dyer and you here for a few days. Our young friend, Miss Isola, has been here holiday-making, but leaves us to-morrow.

Yours ever,

CH. LAMB.

Enfield.

Emma's love to Mr and Mrs Dyer.

George Dyer, Esq., Clifford's Inn.

CCCCLXXIX. TO BERNARD BARTON

Enfield Chase Side, Saturday 25th July, A.D. 1829, 11 A.M.

There—a fuller, plumper, juicier date never dropt from Idumean palm. Am I in the date-ive case now? If not, a fig for dates, which is more than a date is worth. I never stood much affected to these limitary specialities, Least of all, since the date of my superannuation.

What have I with Time to do?
Slaves of desks, 'twas meant for you.

Dear B. B.,—Your handwriting has conveyed much pleasure to me in the report of Lucy's restoration. Would I could send you as good news of my poor Lucy. But some wearisome weeks I must remain lonely yet. I have had the loneliest time, near 10 weeks, broken by a short apparition of Emma for her holidays, whose departure only deepened the returning solitude; and by ten days I have past in Town. But Town, with all my native hankering after it, is not what it was. The streets, the shops are left, but all old friends are gone. And in London I was frightfully convinced of this as I past houses and places—empty caskets now—I have ceased to care

almost about any body. The bodies I cared for are in graves, or dispersed. My old Clubs, that lived so long, and flourish'd so steadily, are crumbled away. When I took leave of our adopted young friend at Charing Cross, 'twas heavy unfeeling rain, and I had no where to go. Home have I none—and not a sympathizing house to turn to in the great city. Never did the waters of the heaven pour down on a forlorner head. Yet I tried ten days at a sort of friend's house, but it was large and straggling—one of the individuals of my old long knot of friends, card-players, pleasant companions—that have tumbled to pieces into dust and other things—and I got home on Thursday, convinced that I was better to get home to my hole at Enfield, and hide like a sick cat in my corner. Less than a month, I hope, will bring home Mary. She is at Fulham, looking better in her health than ever, but sadly rambling, and scarce showing any pleasure in seeing me, or curiosity when I should come again. But the old feelings will come back again, and we shall drown old sorrows over a game at Picquet again. But 'tis a tedious cut out of a life of sixty-four, to lose twelve or thirteen weeks every year or two. And to make me more alone, our ill-temper'd maid is gone, who, with all her airs, was yet a home-piece of furniture, a record of better days; the young thing that has succeeded her is good and attentive, but she is nothing—and I have no one here to talk over old matters with. Scolding and quarrelling have some thing of familiarity, and a community of interest—they imply acquaintance—they are of resentment, which is of the family of dearness. I can neither scold nor quarrel at this insignificant implement of necessary services; she is less than a cat, and just better than a deal Dresser. What I can do, and do over-do, is to walk, but deadly long are the days—these summer all-day days, with but a half hour's candle-light and no fire-light. I do not write, tell your kind inquisi-

tive Eliza, and can hardly read. In the ensuing *Blackwood* will be an old rejected farce of mine, which may be new to you, if you see that same dull medley. What things are all the Magazines now—I contrive studiously not to see them. The popular *New Monthly* is perfect trash. Poor Hessey, I suppose you see, has failed; Hunt and Clarke too. Your "Vulgar Truths" will be a good name; and I think your prose must please—me at least; but 'tis useless to write poetry with no purchasers. 'Tis cold work Authorship without some thing to puff one into fashion. Could you not write something on Quakerism—for Quakers to read—but nominally addrest to Non-Quakers? explaining your dogmas—waiting on the Spirit—by the analogy of human calmness and patient waiting on the judgment? I scarcely know what I mean; but to make Non-Quakers reconciled to your doctrines, by showing something like them in mere human operations—but I hardly understand myself, so let it pass for nothing. I pity you for over-work, but I assure you no-work is worse. The mind preys on itself, the most unwholesome food. I brag'd formerly that I could not have too much time. I have a surfeit. With few years to come, the days are wearisome. But weariness is not eternal. Something will shine out to take the load off, that flags me, which is at present intolerable. I have killed an hour or two in this poor scrawl. I am a sanguinary murderer of Time, and would kill him inch-meal just now. But the snake is vital. Well, I shall write merrier anon. 'Tis the present copy of my countenance I send, and to complain is a little to alleviate. May you enjoy yourself as far as the wicked world will let you—and think that you are not quite alone, as I am! Health to Lucia and to Anna, and kind remembrances. Yours forlorn,

C. L.

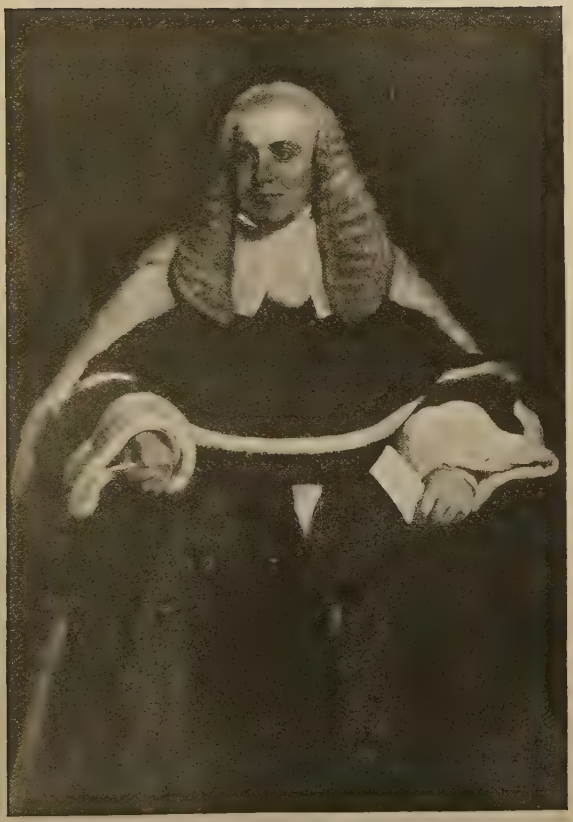
CHAPTER II

THE LODGINGS NEXT DOOR
OCTOBER 1829—MAY 1833

CCCCLXXX. TO JAMES GILMAN

Chase Side, Enfield, 26th Oct. 1829.

Dear Gilman,—Allsop brought me your kind message yesterday. How can I account for having not visited Highgate this long time? Change of place seemed to have changed me. How grieved I was to hear in what indifferent health Coleridge has been, and I not to know of it! A little school divinity, well applied, may be healing. I send him honest Tom of Aquin; that was always an obscure great idea to me: I never thought or dreamed to see him in the flesh, but t'other day I rescued him from a stall in Barbican and brought him off in triumph. He comes to greet Coleridge's acceptance, for his shoe-latchets I am unworthy to unloose. Yet there are pretty pro's and con's, and such unsatisfactory learning in him. Commend me to the question of etiquette—"*utrum annunciatio debuerit fieri per angelum*"—*Quæst.* 30, *Articulus* 2. I protest, till now I had thought Gabriel a fellow of some mark and livelihood, not a simple esquire, as I find him. Well, do not break your lay brains, nor I neither, with these curious nothings. They are nuts to our dear friend, whom hoping to see at your first friendly hint that it will be convenient, I end with begging our very kindest loves to Mrs Gilman. We have had a sorry house of it here. Our spirits have been reduced till we were at hope's end what to do. Obliged to quit this house, and afraid to



Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd, from the painting by H. W. Pickersgill, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery.

engage another, till in extremity, I took the desperate resolve of kicking house and all down, like Bunyan's pack; and here we are in a new life at board and lodging, with an honest couple our neighbours. We have ridded ourselves of the cares of dirty acres; and the change, though of less than a week, has had the most beneficial effects on Mary already. She looks two years and a half younger for it. But we have had sore trials.

God send us one happy meeting!—Yours faithfully,

C. LAMB.

CCCCLXXXI. TO MR SERJEANT TALFOURD

[1829.]

Dear Talfourd,—You could not have told me of a more friendly thing than you have been doing. I am proud of my namesake. I shall take care never to do any dirty action, pick pockets, or anyhow get myself hanged, for fear of reflecting ignominy upon your young Chrisom. I have now a motive to be good. I shall not *omnis moriar*:—my name borne down the black gulf of oblivion.

I shall survive in eleven letters, five more than Cæsar. Possibly I shall come to be knighted, or more! Sir C. L. Talfourd, Bart.!

Yet hath it an authorish twang with it, which will wear out my name for poetry. Give him a smile from me till I see him. If you do not drop down before, some day in the *week after next* I will come and take one night's lodging with you, if convenient, before you go hence. You shall name it. We are in town to-morrow *speciali gratiâ*, but by no arrangement can get up near you.

Believe us both, with greatest regards, yours and Mrs Talfourd's.

CHARLES LAMB-PHILO-TALFOURD.

I come as near it as I can.

CCCCXXXII. TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[No Date.]

Dear Fugueist, or bear'st thou rather Contrapuntist?—We expect you four (as many as the table will hold without squeezing) at Mrs Westwood's *Table d'Hôte* on Thursday. You will find the *White House* shut up, and us moved under the wing of the *Phœnix* which gives us friendly refuge. Beds for guests, we have none, but cleanly accomodings at the *Crown and Horse-shoe*.

Yours harmonically, C. L.

Vincentio (what, ho!) Novello, a Squire,
66, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

CCCCLXXXIII. TO THE SAME

Enfield, 6 Nov., '29.

My dear Novello,—I am afraid I shall appear rather tardy in offering my congratulations, however sincere, upon your daughter's marriage. The truth is, I had put together a little Serenata upon the occasion, but was prevented from sending it by my sister, to whose judgment I am apt to defer too much in these kind of things; so that, now I have her consent, the offering, I am afraid, will have lost the grace of seasonableness. Such as it is, I send it. She thinks it a little too old-fashioned in the manner, too much like what they wrote a century back. But I cannot write in the modern style, if I try ever so hard. I have attended to the proper divisions for the music, and you will have little difficulty in composing it. If I may advise, make Pepusch your model, or Blow. It will be necessary to have a good second voice, as the stress of the melody lies there:—

SERENTA, FOR TWO VOICES,

On the Marriage of Charles Cowden Clarke, Esqre., to Victoria, eldest daughter of Vincent Novello, Esqre.

DUETTO

Wake th' harmonious voice and string,
Love and Hymen's triumph sing,
Sounds with secret charms combining,
In melodious union joining,
Best the wondrous joys can tell,
That in hearts united dwell.

RECITATIVE

First Voice. To young Victoria's happy fame
Well may the Arts a trophy raise,
Music grows sweeter in her praise,
And, own'd by her, with rapture speaks her name.
To touch the brave Cowdenio's heart,
The Graces all in her conspire;
Love arms her with his surest dart,
Apollo with his lyre.

AIR

The list'ning Muses all around her
Think 'tis Phœbus' strain they hear;
And Cupid, drawing near to wound her,
Drops his bow, and stands to hear.

RECITATIVE

Second Voice. While crowds of rivals with despair
Silent admire, or vainly court the Fair,
Behold the happy conquest of her eyes,
A Hero is the glorious prize!
In courts, in camps, thro' distant realms renown'd,
Cowdenio comes!—Victoria, see,
He comes with British honour crown'd,
Love leads his eager steps to thee.

AIR

In tender sighs he silence breaks,
The Fair his flame approves,
Consenting blushes warm her cheeks,
She smiles, she yields, she loves.

RECITATIVE

First Voice. Now Hymen at the altar stands,
And while he joins their faithful hands,

Behold! by ardent vows brought down,
Immortal Concòrd, heavenly bright,
Array'd in robes of purest light,
Descends, th' auspicious rites to crown.
Her golden harp the goddess brings;
Its magic sound
Commands a sudden silence all around,
And strains prophetic thus attune the strings.

DUETTO

First Voice. The Swain his Nymph possessing,
Second Voice. The Nymph her swain caressing,
First and Second. Shall still improve the blessing,
For ever kind and true.
Both. While rolling years are flying
Love, Hymen's lamp supplying,
With fuel never dying.
Shall still the flame renew.

To so great a master as yourself I have no need to suggest that the peculiar tone of the composition demands sprightliness, occasionally checked by tenderness, as in the second air,—

She smiles,—she yields,—she loves.

Again, you need not be told that each fifth line of the two first recitatives requires a crescendo.

And your exquisite taste will prevent your falling into the error of Purcell, who at a passage similar to *that* in my first air,

Drops his bow, and stands to hear,

directed the first violin thus:—

Here the first violin must drop his *bow*.

But, besides the absurdity of disarming his principal performer of so necessary an adjunct to his instrument, in such an emphatic part of the composition too, which must have had a droll effect at the time, all such minutiæ of adaptation are at this time of day very

properly exploded, and Jackson of Exeter very fairly ranks them under the head of puns.

Should you succeed in the setting of it, we propose having it performed (we have one very tolerable second voice here, and Mr Holmes, I dare say, would supply the minor parts) at the Greyhound. But it must be a secret to the young couple till we can get the band in readiness.

Believe me, dear Novello,
Yours truly,
C. LAMB.

CCCCLXXXIV. TO WALTER WILSON

Enfield, 15th November 1829.

My dear Wilson,—I have not opened a packet of unknown contents for many years that gave me so much pleasure as when I disclosed your three volumes. I have given them a careful perusal, and they have taken their degree of classical books upon my shelves. De Foe was always my darling; but what darkness was I in as to far the larger part of his writings! I have now an epitome of them all. I think the way in which you have done the "Life" the most judicious you could have pitched upon. You have made him tell his own story, and your comments are in keeping with the tale. Why, I never heard of such a work as the *Review*. Strange that in my stall-hunting days I never so much as lit upon an odd volume of it. This circumstance looks as if they were never of any great circulation. But I may have met with 'em, and not knowing the prize, overpast 'em. I was almost a stranger to the whole history of Dissenters in those reigns, and picked my way through that strange book the "Consolidator" at random. How affecting are some of his personal appeals! What a machine of projects he set on foot! and following writers have picked his pocket of the patents. I do not under-

stand whereabouts in "Roxana" he himself left off. I always thought the complete-tourist-sort of description of the town she passes through on her last embarkation miserably unseasonable and out of place. I knew not they were spurious. Enlighten me as to where the apocryphal matter commences. I, by accident, can correct one A. D., "Family Instructor," vol. ii. 1718: you say his first volume had then reached the fourth edition; now I have a fifth, printed for Eman. Matthews, 1717. So have I plucked one rotten date, or rather picked it up where it had inadvertently fallen, from your flourishing date tree, the Palm of Engaddi. I may take it for my pains. I think yours a book which every public library must have, and every English scholar should have. I am sure it has enriched my meagre stock of the author's works. I seem to be twice as opulent. Mary is by my side, just finishing the second volume. It must have interest to divert her away so long from her modern novels. Colburn will be quite jealous. I was a little disappointed at my "Ode to the Treadmill" not finding a place, but it came out of time. The two papers of mine will puzzle the reader, being so akin. Odd, that never keeping a scrap of my own letters, with some fifteen years' interval I should nearly have said the same things. But I shall always feel happy in having my name go down anyhow with De Foe's, and that of his historiographer. I promise myself, if not immortality, yet diuternity of being read in consequence. We have both had much illness this year; and feeling infirmities and fretfulness grow upon us, we have cast off the cares of housekeeping, sold off our goods, and commenced boarding and lodging with a very comfortable old couple next door to where you found us. We use a sort of common table. Nevertheless, we have reserved a private one for an old friend; and when Mrs Wilson and you revisit Babylon, we shall

pray you to make it yours for a season. Our very kindest remembrances to you both.

From your old friend and *fellow-journalist*, now in *two instances*, C. LAMB.

Hazlitt is going to make your book a basis for a review of De Foe's Novels in the "the Edinbro'." I wish I had health and spirits to do it. Hone I have not seen, but I doubt not he will be much pleased with your performance. I very much hope you will give us an account of Dunton, &c. But what I should more like to see would be a Life and Times of Bunyan. Wishing health to you, and long life to your healthy book, again I subscribe me,

Yours in verity, C. L.

CCCCLXXXV. TO JAMES GILMAN

1829.

Pray trust me with the "Church History," as well as the "Worthies." A moon shall restore both. Also give me back "Him of Aquinum." In return you have the *light of my countenance*. Adieu.

P.S.—A sister also of mine comes with it. A son of Nimshi drives her. Their driving will have been furious, impassioned. Pray God they have not toppled over the tunnel! I promise you I fear their steed, bred out of the wind without father, semi-Melchisedecish, hot, phaetontic. From my country lodgings at Enfield. C. L.

CCCCLXXXVI. TO THE SAME

Nov. 30, 1829.

Dear G.,—The excursionists reached home, and the good town of Enfield, a little after four, without slip or dislocation. Little has transpired concerning the events of the back-journey, save that on passing

the house of 'Squire Mellish, situate a stone bow's cast from the hamlet, Father Westwood, with a good-natured wonderment, exclaimed, "I cannot think what is gone of Mr Mellish's rooks. I fancy they have taken flight somewhere, but I have missed them two or three years past." All this while, according to his fellow-traveller's report, the rookery was darkening the air above with undiminished population, and deafening all ears but his with their cawings. But Nature has been gently withdrawing such phenomena from the notice of two of Thomas Westwood's senses, from the time he began to miss the rooks. T. Westwood has passed a retired life in this hamlet, of thirty or forty years, living upon the minimum which is consistent with gentility, yet a star among the minor gentry, receiving the bows of the trades-people, and courtesies of the alms-women, daily. Children venerate him not less for his external show of gentry, than they wonder at him for a gentle rising endorsation of the person, not amounting to a hump, or if a hump, innocuous as the hump of the buffalo, and coronative of as mild qualities. 'Tis a throne on which patience seems to sit,—the proud perch of a self-respecting humility, stooping with condescension. Thereupon the cares of life have sate, and rid him easily. For he has thrid the *angustiæ domûs* with dexterity. Life opened upon him with comparative brilliancy. He set out as a rider or traveller for a wholesale house, in which capacity he tells of many hair-breadth escapes that befell him; one especially, how he rode a mad horse into the town of Devizes; how horse and rider arrived in a foam, to the utter consternation of the expostulating hostlers, inn-keepers, &c. It seems it was sultry weather, piping hot; the steed tormented into frenzy with gad-flies, long past being roadworthy; but safety and the interest of the house he rode for were incompatible things; a fall in serge cloth was expected, and a mad

entrance they made of it. Whether the exploit was purely voluntary, or partially; or whether a certain personal defiguration in the man part of this extraordinary centaur (non-assistive to partition of natures) might not enforce the conjunction, I stand not to inquire. I look not with 'skew eyes into the deeds of heroes. The hosier that was burnt with his shop in Field Lane, on Tuesday night, shall have past to heaven for me like a Marian Martyr, provided always, that he consecrated the fortuitous incremation with a short ejaculation in the exit, as much as if he had taken his state degrees of martyrdom *in formâ* in the market vicinage. There is adoptive as well as acquisitive sacrifice. Be the animus what it might, the fact is indisputable, that this composition was seen flying all abroad, and mine host of Daintry may yet remember its passing through his town, if his scores are not more faithful than his memory. After this exploit (enough for one man), Thomas Westwood seems to have subsided into a less hazardous occupation: and in the twenty-fifth year of his age we find him a haberdasher in Bow Lane: yet still retentive of his early riding (though leaving it to rawer stomachs), and Christmasly at night sithence to this last, and shall to his latest Christmas, hath he, doth he, and shall he, tell after supper the story of the insane steed and the desperate rider. Save for Bedlam or Luke's no eye could have guessed that melting day what house he rid for. But he reposes on his bridles, and after the ups and downs (metaphoric only) of a life behind the counter — hard riding sometimes, I fear, for poor T. W.—with the scrapings together of the shop, and *one anecdote*, he hath finally settled at Enfield; by hard economising, gardening, building for himself, hath reared a mansion; married a daughter; qualified a son for a counting-house; gotten the respect of high and low; served for self or substitute the greater parish offices; hath a special

voice at vestries; and, domiciliating us, nath reflected a portion of his house-keeping respectability upon your humble servants. We are greater, being his lodgers, than when we were substantial renters. His name is a passport to take off the sneers of the native Enfielders against obnoxious foreigners. We are endenizened. This much of T. Westwood have I thought fit to acquaint you, that you may see the exemplary reliance upon Providence with which I entrusted so dear a charge as my own sister to the guidance of a man that rode the mad horse into Devizes. To come from his heroic character, all the amiable qualities of domestic life concentre in this tamed Bellerophon. He is excellent over a glass of grog; just as pleasant without it; laughs when he hears a joke, and when (which is much oftener) he hears it not; sings glorious old sea-songs on festival nights; and but upon a slight acquaintance of two years, Coleridge, is as dear a deaf old man to us as old Norris (rest his soul!) was after fifty. To him and his scanty literature (what there is of it, *sound*) have we flown from the metropolis and its damn'd annualists, reviewers, authors, and the whole muddy ink press of that stagnant pool.

Now, Gilman again, you do not know the treasure of the Fullers. I calculate on having massy reading till Christmas. All I want here is books of the true sort, not those things in boards that moderns mistake for books, what they club for at book-clubs.

I did not mean to cheat you with a blank side, but my eye smarts, for which I am taking medicine, and abstain, this day at least, from any aliments but milk-porridge, the innocent taste of which I am anxious to renew after a half-century's disacquaintance. If a blot fall here like a tear, it is not pathos, but an angry eye.

Farewell, while my *specilla* are sound.

Yours and yours, C. Lamb.

CCCCLXXXVII. TO BERNARD BARTON

December 8th, 1829.

My dear B. B.,—You are very good to have been uneasy about us, and I have the satisfaction to tell you, that we are both in better health and spirits than we have been for a year or two past; I may say than we have been, since we have been at Enfield. The cause may not appear quite adequate, when I tell you, that a course of ill-health and spirits brought us to the determination of giving up our house here, and we are boarding and lodging with a worthy old couple, long inhabitants of Enfield, where everything is done for us without our trouble, further than a reasonable weekly payment. We should have done so before, but it is not easy to flesh and blood to give up an ancient establishment, to discard old Penates, and from house keepers to turn house-sharers. (N.B. We are not in the Workhouse.) Diocletian in his garden found more repose than on the imperial seat of Rome, and the nob of Charles the Fifth aked seldomer under a monk's cowl than under the diadem. With such shadows of assimilation we countenance our degradation. With such a load of dignified cares just removed from our shoulders, we can the more understand and pity the accession to yours, by the advancement to an Assigneeship. I will tell you honestly, B. B., that it has been long my deliberate judgment, that all Bankrupts, of whatsoever denomination civil or religious whatever, ought to be hang'd. The pity of mankind has for ages run in a wrong channel, and has been diverted from poor Creditors (how many I have known sufferers! Hazlitt has just been defrauded of £100 by his Bookseller-friend's breaking) to scoundrel Debtors. I know all the topics; that distress may come upon an honest man without his fault, that the failure of one that he trusted was his calamity &c. Then let *both* be

hang'd. O how careful it would make traders! These are my deliberate thoughts after many years' experience in matters of trade. What a world of trouble it would save you, if Friend * * * * * had been immediately hang'd, without benefit of clergy, which (being a Quaker I presume) he could not reasonably insist upon. Why, after slaving twelve months in your assign-business, you will be enabled to declare sevenpence in the Pound in all human probability. B. B., he should be *hanged.* Trade will never reflourish in this land till such a Law is establish'd. I write big not to save ink but eyes, mine having been troubled with reading thro' three folios of old Fuller in almost as few days and I went to bed last night in agony, and am writing with a vial of eye-water before me alternately dipping in vial and inkstand. This may inflame my zeal against Bankrupts—but it was my speculation when I could see better. Half the world's misery (Eden else) is owing to want of money, and all that want is owing to Bankrupts. I declare I would, if the state wanted Practitioners, turn Hangman myself, and should have great pleasure in hanging the first after my salutary law had been establish'd. I have seen no annuals and wish to see none. I like your fun upon them, and was quite pleased with Bowles's sonnet. Hood is or was at Brighton, but a note, prose or rhyme, to him, Robert Street, Adelphi, I am sure would extract a copy of *his*, which also I have not seen. Wishing you and yours all Health, I conclude while these frail glasses are to me—eyes.

C. L.

CCCCLXXXVIII. TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1829.

Dear Coleridge, — Your sonnet is capital. The paper is ingenious, only that it split into four parts (besides a side splinter) in the carriage. I have

The room in Mr Gillman's house, The Grove, Highgate, which served as Coleridge's study and bedroom and in which he died.

From a water-colour drawing now in the possession of Miss Christabel Coleridge, of Cheyne, Torquay.

transferred it to the common English paper *manufactured of rags*, for better preservation. I never knew before how the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were written. 'Tis strikingly corroborated by observations on Cats. These domestic animals, put 'em on a rug before the fire, wink their eyes up, and listen to the kettle, and then purr, which is *their* poetry.

On Sunday week we kiss your hands (if they are clean). This next Sunday I have been engaged for some time.

With remembrances to your good host and hostess,

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

CCCCLXXXIX. ? TO HONE—OR ALLSOP

(A portion of a letter)

[1829].

—— Calamy is *good reading*; Mary is always thankful for books in her way. I won't trouble you for any in *my way*, yet having enough to read. Young Hazlitt lives, at least his father does, at 3 or 36 [36 I have it down with the 6 scratch'd out] Bouverie Street, Fleet Street. If not to be found, his mother's address is Mrs Hazlitt, Mrs Tomlinson's, Potter's Bar. At one or other he must be heard of. We shall expect you with the full moon. Meantime, our thanks. C. L.

We go on very quietly, &c.

CCCCXC. TO BASIL MONTAGU

Dear M.,—I have received the enclosed from Miss James. Her sister, Mrs Trueman, is a most worthy person. I know all their history. They are four daughters of them, daughters of a Welch Clergyman of the greatest respectability, who dying, the family

were obliged to look about them, and by some fatality they all became nurses at Mr Warburton's, Hoxton. Mrs Parsons, one of them, is patronized by Dr. Tuthill, who can speak to *her* character. I can safely speak to Miss James's for 15 years or more. Trueman has been a keeper at Warburton's. Himself and wife are willing to undertake the entire charge at £200 a year. I think you hardly pay less now. They propose take a cottage near the Regent's Park, to which by the *omnibuses* you can have short and easy access at any hour. I will call upon you to-morrow morning at office. Pray, think upon it in the meanwhile. I really think it desirable.

Yours ever

C. LAMB.

CCCCXCI. TO JAMES KENNEY

Dear Ken,—I will not see London again without seeing your pleasant Play. In meanwhile, pray send three or four orders to a Lady who can't afford to pay, Miss James, No. 1, Grove Road, Lisson Grove, Paddington, a day or two before; and come and see us some Evening, with my hitherto uncorrupted and honest bookseller, Moxon.

C. LAMB.

CCCCXCII. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Jan. 22nd, 1830.

And is it a year since we parted from you at the steps of Edmonton stage? There are not now the years that there used to be. The tale of the dwindled age of men, reported of successional mankind, is true of the same man only. We do not live a year in a year now. 'Tis a *punctum stans*. The seasons pass us with indifference. Spring cheers not, nor Winter

heightens our gloom; Autumn hath foregone its moralities,—they are "hey-pass repass," as in a show-box. Yet, as far as last year occurs back,—for they scarce show a reflex now, they make no memory as heretofore,—'twas sufficiently gloomy. Let the sullen nothing pass. Suffice it, that after sad spirits, prolonged through many of its months, as it called them, we have cast our skins; have taken a farewell of the pompous, troublesome trifle, called house-keeping, and are settled down into poor boarders and lodgers at next door with an old couple, the Baucis and Baucida of dull Enfield. Here we have nothing to do with our victuals but to eat them; with the garden but to see it grow; with the tax-gatherer but to hear him knock; with the maid but to hear her scolded. Scot and lot, butcher, baker, are things unknown to us, save as spectators of the pageant. We are fed we know not how; quietists—confiding ravens. We have *otium pro dignitate*, a respectable insignificance. Yet in the self-condemned obliviousness, in the stagnation, some molesting yearnings of life, not quite killed, rise, prompting me that there was a London, and that I was of that old Jerusalem. In dreams I am in Fleet Market, but I wake and cry to sleep again. I die hard, a stubborn Eloisa in this detestable Paraclete. What have I gained by health? Intolerable dulness. What by early hours and moderate meals? A total blank. O never let the lying poets be believed, who 'tice men from the cheerful haunts of streets, or think they mean it not of a country village. In the ruins of Palmyra I could gird myself up to solitude, or muse to the snorings of the Seven Sleepers; but to have a little teazing image of a town about one; country folks that do not look like country folks; shops two yards square, half-a-dozen apples, and two penn'orth of overlooked ginger-bread for the lofty fruiterers of Oxford Street; and, for the immortal book and print stalls, a circulating library

that stands still, where the show-picture is a last year's Valentine, and whither the fame of the last ten Scotch novels has not yet travelled,—(marry, they just begin to be conscious of the *Redgauntlet*:)—to have a new plastered flat church, and to be wishing that it was but a cathedral! The very blackguards here are degenerate; the topping gentry stock-brokers; the passengers too many to insure your quiet, or let you go about whistling or gaping, too few to be the fine indifferent pageants of Fleet Street. Confining, room-keeping, thickest Winter, is yet more bearable here than the gaudy months. Among one's books at one's fire by candle, one is soothed into an oblivion that one is not in the country; but with the light the green fields return, till I gaze, and in a calenture can plunge myself into St Giles's. O let no native Londoner imagine that health, and rest, and innocent occupation, interchange of converse sweet, and re-creative study, can make the country any thing better than altogether odious and detestable! A garden was the primitive prison, till man, with Promethean felicity and boldness, luckily sinned himself out of it. Thence followed Babylon, Nineveh, Venice, London, haberdashers, goldsmiths, taverns, playhouses, satires, epigrams, puns,—these all came in on the town part, and the thither side of innocence. Man found out inventions. From my den I return you condolence for your decaying sight; not for any thing there is to see in the country, but for the miss of the pleasure of reading a London newspaper. The poets are as well to listen to; any thing high may, nay must, be read out; you read it to yourself with an imaginary auditor; but the light paragraphs must be glid over by the proper eye; mouthing mumbles their gossamery substance. 'Tis these trifles I should mourn in fading sight. A newspaper is the single gleam of comfort I receive here; it comes from rich Cathay with tidings of mankind. Yet I could not attend to it,

read out by the most beloved voice. But your eyes do not get worse, I gather. O for the collyrium of Tobias inclosed in a whiting's liver, to send you with no apocryphal good wishes! The last long time I heard from you, you had knocked your head against something. Do not do so; for your head (I do not flatter) is not a knob, or the top of a brass nail, or the end of a nine pin,—unless a Vulcanian hammer could fairly batter a "Recluse" out of it; then would I bid the smirched god knock and knock lustily, the two-handed skinker. Mary must squeeze out a line *propriâ manu*, but indeed her fingers have been incorrigibly nervous to letter writing for a long interval. 'Twill please you all to hear, that though I fret like a lion in a net, her present health and spirits are better than they have been for some time past. She is absolutely three years and a half younger, as I tell her, since we have adopted this boarding plan.

Our providers are an honest pair, Dame Westwood and her husband. He, when the light of prosperity shined on them, a moderately thriving haberdasher within Bow bells, retired since with something under a competence; writes himself parcel gentleman; hath borne parish offices; sings fine old sea songs at threescore and ten; sighs only now and then when he thinks that he has a son on his hands, about fifteen, whom he finds a difficulty in getting out into the world, and then checks a sigh with muttering, as I once heard him prettily, not meaning to be heard, "I have married my daughter, however"; takes the weather as it comes; outsides it to town in severest season; and o' winter nights tells old stories not tending to literature, (how comfortable to authorrid folks!) and has *one anecdote*, upon which and about forty pounds a year he seems to have retired in green old age. It was how he was a rider in his youth, travelling for shops, and once (not to balk his employer's bargain) on a sweltering day in August,

rode foaming into Dunstable upon a mad horse, to the dismay and expostulatory wonderment of inn-keepers, ostlers, &c., who declared they would not have bestrid the beast to win the Derby. Understand, the creature galled to death and desperation by gad-flies, cormorant-winged, worse than beset Inachus's daughter. This he tells, this he brindles and burnishes on a Winter's eve; 'tis his star of set glory, his rejuvenescence, to descant upon. Far from me be it (*dii avertant*) to look a gift story in the mouth, or cruelly to surmise (as those who doubt the plunge of Curtius) that the inseparate conjuncture of man and beast, the centaur-phenomenon that staggered all Dunstable, might have been the effect of unromantic necessity; that the horse-part carried the reasoning, willy nilly; that needs must when such a devil drove; that certain spiral configurations in the frame of Thomas Westwood unfriendly to alighting, made the alliance more forcible than voluntary. Let him enjoy his fame for me, nor let me hint a whisper that shall dismount Bellerophon. But in case he was an involuntary martyr, yet if in the fiery conflict he buckled the soul of a constant haberdasher to him, and adopted his flames, let accident and him share the glory. You would all like Thomas Westwood. How weak is painting to describe a man! Say that he stands four feet and a nail high by his own yard measure, which, like the sceptre of Agamemnon, shall never sprout again, still you have no adequate idea; nor when I tell you that his dear hump, which I have favoured in the picture, seems to me of the buffalo—indicative and repository of mild qualities, a budget of kindnesses—still you have not the man. Knew you old Norris of the Temple? sixty years ours and our fathers' friend? He was not more natural to us than this old W., the acquaintance of scarce more weeks. Under his roof now ought I to take my rest, but that back-looking ambition tells me I might yet be a

Londoner! Well, if we ever do move, we have incumbrances the less to impede us; all our furniture has faded under the auctioneer's hammer, going for nothing, like the tarnished frippery of the prodigal, and we have only a spoon or two left to bless us. Clothed we came into Enfield, and naked we must go out of it. I would live in London, shirtless, bookless. Henry Crabb is at Rome; advices to that effect have reached Bury. But by solemn legacy he bequeathed at parting (whether he should live or die) a turkey of Suffolk to be sent every succeeding Christmas to us and divers other friends. What a genuine old bachelor's action! I fear he will find the air of Italy too classic. His station is in the Harz forest; his soul is be-Goethed. Miss Kelly we never see; Talfourd not this half-year: the latter flourishes, but the exact number of his children (God forgive me!) I have utterly forgotten. We single people are often out in our count there. Shall I say two? We see scarce any body. Can I cram loves enough to you all in this little O? Excuse particularizing.

C. L.

CCCCXCIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

Feb. 25, 1830.

Dear B. B.,—To reply to you by return of post, I must gobble up my dinner and despatch this in propriâ personâ to the office, to be in time. So take it from me hastily, that you are perfectly welcome to furnish A. C. with the scrap, which I had almost forgotten writing. The more my character comes to be known, the less my veracity will come to be suspected. Time every day clears up some suspected narrative of Herodotus, Bruce, and others of us great Travellers. Why, that Joseph Paice was as real a person, as Joseph Hume, and a great deal pleasanter. A careful observer of life, Barnard, has no need to

invent. Nature romances it for him. Dinner plates rattle, and I positively shall incur indigestion by carrying it half concocted to the Post House. Let me congratulate you on the Spring coming in, and do you in return condole with me for the Winter going out. When the old one goes, seldom comes a better. I dread the prospect of Summer, with his all day long days. No need of his assistance to make country places dull. With fire and candle-light I can dream myself in Holborn. With lightsome skies shining in to bed time, I can not. This Mesech, and these tents of Kedar—I would dwell in the skirts of Jericho rather, and think every blast of the coming-in Mail a Ram's Horn. Give me old London at Fire and Plague times, rather than these tepid gales, healthy country air, and purposeless exercise.

Leg of mutton absolutely on the table.

Take our hasty loves and short farewell.

C. L.

CCCCXCIV. TO MRS WILLIAMS

[February 26, 1830.]

Dear Madam,—May God bless you for your attention to our poor Emma! I am so shaken with your sad news I can scarce write. She is too ill to be removed at present; but we can only say that if she is spared, when that can be practicable, we have always a home for her. Speak to her of it, when she is capable of understanding, and let me conjure you to let us know from day to day, the state she is in. But one line is all we crave. Nothing we can do for her, that shall not be done. We shall be in the terriblest suspense. We had no notion she was going to be ill. A line from anybody in your house will much oblige us. I feel for the situation this trouble places you in.

Can I go to her aunt, or do anything? I do not know what to offer. We are in great distress. Pray

relieve us, if you can, by somehow letting us know. I will fetch her here, or anything. Your kindness can never be forgot. Pray excuse my abruptness. I hardly know what I write. And take our warmest thanks. Hoping to hear something, I remain, dear Madam,

Yours most faithfully,

C. Lamb.

Our grateful respects to Mr Williams.

CCCCXCV. TO THE SAME

Enfield, 1 March 1830.

Dear Madam, — We cannot thank you enough. Your two words "much better" were so considerate and good. The good news affected my sister to an agony of tears; but they have relieved us from such a weight. We were ready to expect the worst, and were hardly able to bear the good hearing. You speak so kindly of her, too, and think she may be able to resume her duties. We were prepared, as far as our humble means would have enabled us, to have taken her from all duties. But, far better for the dear girl it is that she should have a prospect of being useful.

I am sure you will pardon my writing again; for my heart is so full, that it was impossible to refrain. Many thanks for your offer to write again, should any change take place. I dare not yet be quite out of fear, the alteration has been so sudden. But I will hope you will have a respite from the trouble of writing again. I know no expression to convey a sense of your kindness. We were in such a state expecting the post. I had almost resolved to come as near you as Bury; but my sister's health does not permit my absence on melancholy occasions. But, O, how happy will she be to part with me, when I shall hear the

agreeable news that I may come and fetch her. She shall be as quiet as possible. No restorative means shall be wanting to restore her back to you well and comfortable.

She will make up for this sad interruption of her young friend's studies. I am sure she will—she must—after you have spared her for a little time. Change of scene may do very much for her. I think this last proof of your kindness to her in her desolate state can hardly make her love and respect you more than she has ever done. O, how glad shall we be to return her fit for her occupation. Madam, I trouble you with my nonsense; but you would forgive me, if you knew how light-hearted you have made two poor souls at Enfield, that were gasping for news of their poor friend. I will pray for you and Mr Williams. Give our very best respects to him, and accept our thanks. We are happier than we hardly know how to bear. God bless you! My very kindest congratulations to Miss Humphreys.

Believe me, dear Madam,

Your ever obliged servant,

C. Lamb.

CCCCXCVI. TO MRS HAZLITT

[March 4, 1830.]

Dear Sarah,—I was meditating to come and see you, but I am unable for the walk. We are both very unwell, and under affliction for poor Emma, who has had a very dangerous brain fever, and is lying very ill at Bury, from whence I expect a summons to fetch her. We are very sorry for your confinement. Any books I have are at your service. I am almost, I may say *quite* sure, that letters to India pay no postage, and may go by the regular Post Office, now in St Martin's le Grand. I think any receiving house would take them. I wish I could confirm your

hopes about Dick Norris. But it is quite a dream. Some old Bencher of his surname is made *Treasurer* for the year, I suppose, which is an annual office. Norris was Sub-Treasurer, quite a different thing. They were pretty well in the Summer; since when we have heard nothing of them.

Mrs Reynolds is better than she has been for years. She is with a disagreeable woman that she has taken a mighty fancy to, out of spite to a rival woman she used to live and quarrel with. She grows quite *fat*, they tell me, and may live as long as I do, to be a tormenting rent-charge to my diminished income. We go on pretty comfortably in our new place. I will come and have a talk with you when poor Emma's affair is settled, and will bring books. At present I am weak, and could hardly bring my legs home yesterday after a much shorter stroll than to Northaw. Mary has got her bonnet on for a short expedition. May you get better, as the Spring comes on. She sends her best love

With mine, C. L.

Mrs Hazlitt,
Mrs Tomlinson's,
Northaw, near Potter's Bar, Herts.

CCCCXCVII. TO MRS WILLIAMS

Enfield, 5 Mar. 1830.

Dear Madam,—I feel greatly obliged by your letter of Tuesday, and should not have troubled you again so soon, but that you express a wish to hear that our anxiety was relieved by the assurances in it. You have indeed given us much comfort respecting our young friend, but considerable uneasiness respecting your own health and spirits, which must have suffered under such attention. Pray believe me that we shall wait in quiet hope for the time, when I shall receive the welcome summons to come and relieve you from

a charge, which you have executed with such tenderness. We desire nothing so much as to exchange it with you. Nothing shall be wanting on my part to remove her with the best judgment I can without (I hope) any necessity for depriving you of the services of your valuable housekeeper. Until the day comes, we entreat that you will spare yourself the trouble of writing, which we should be ashamed to impose upon you in your present weak state. Not hearing from you we shall be satisfied in believing that there has been no relapse. Therefore we beg that you will not add to your troubles by unnecessary, though *most kind*, correspondence. Till I have the pleasure of thanking you personally, I beg you to accept these written acknowledgments of all your kindness. With respects to Mr Williams and sincere prayers for both your healths, I remain,

Your ever obliged servant,

C. Lamb.

My sister joins me in respects and thanks.

CCCCXCVIII. TO JAMES GILLMAN

1830.

Dear Gilman,—Pray do you, or S. T. C., immediately write to say you have received back the golden works of the dear, fine, silly old angel, which I part from, bleeding, and to say how the Winter has used you all.

It is our intention soon, weather permitting, to come over for a day at Highgate; for beds we will trust to the Gate-House, should you be full: tell me if we may come casually, for in this change of climate there is no naming a day for walking. With best loves to Mrs Gilman, &c.,

Yours, mopish, but in health,

C. Lamb.

I shall be uneasy till I hear of Fuller's safe arrival.

CCCCXCIX. TO THE SAME

March 8th, 1830.

My dear G.,—Your friend Battin (for I knew him immediately by the smooth satinity of his style) must excuse me for advocating the cause of his friends in Spitalfields. The fact is, I am retained by the Norwich people, and have already appeared in their paper under the signatures of "Lucius Sergius," "Bluff," "Broad-Cloth," "No-Trade-to-the-Woollen-Trade," "Anti-plush," &c., in defence of druggets and long camblets. And without this pre-engagement, I feel I should naturally have chosen a side opposite to——, for in the silken seemingness of his nature there is that which offends me. My flesh tingles at such caterpillars. He shall not crawl me over. Let him and his workmen sing the old burthen,

"Heigh ho, ye weavers!"

for any aid I shall offer them in this emergency. I was over St Luke's the other day with my friend Tuthill, and mightily pleased with one of his contrivances for the comfort and amelioration of the students. They have double cells, in which a pair may lie feet to feet horizontally, and chat the time away as rationally as they can. It must certainly be more sociable for them these warm raving nights. The right-hand truckle in one of these friendly recesses, at present vacant, was preparing, I understood for Mr Irving. Poor fellow! It is time he removed from Pentonville. I followed him as far as to Highbury the other day, with a mob at his heels, calling out upon Ermigiddon, who I suppose is some Scotch moderator. He squinted out his favourite eye last Friday, in the fury of possession, upon a poor woman's shoulders that was crying matches, and has not missed

it. The companion truck, as far as I could measure it with my eye, would conveniently fit a person about the length of Coleridge, allowing for a reasonable drawing up of the feet, not at all painful. Does he talk of moving this quarter? You and I have too much sense to trouble ourselves with revelations; marry, to the same in Greek, you may have something professionally to say. Tell C. that he was to come and see us some fine day. Let it be before he moves, for in his new quarters he will necessarily be confined in his conversation to his brother prophet. Conceive the two Rabbis foot to foot, for there are no Gamaliels there to affect an humbler posture! All are masters in that Patmos, where the law is perfect equality; Latmos I should rather say, for they will be Luna's twin darlings; her affection will be ever at the full. Well; keep *your* brains moist with gooseberry this mad March, for the devil of exposition seeketh dry places.

C. L.

D. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Mr Westwood's, Chase Side,
Enfield, Sunday 14 Mar.
(1830).

My dear Ayrton,

Your letter, which was only not so pleasant as your appearance here would have been, has revived some old images—? staring Hairy Philips (not the Colonel) with his few hairs bristling up at the charge of a revoke, which he declares impossible—the old Captain's significant nod — over the *right* shoulder (was it not)—Mrs Burney's obstinate questioning of the score, after the game was absolutely lost to the devil—the fresh-salt-cold-boil'd-beef suppers at sideboard—all which fancies, redolent of middle age and strengthful spirits, come across us ever and anon in this vale of deliberate senectitude, doom'd Enfield.

You imagine a deep gulf between you and us; and there is a pitiable hiatus in *kind* between St James' Park and *Hartfordshire*, as you call us—but the mere distance in Turnpike roads is a trifle. The roof of a coach whirls you down in an hour or two. We have a sure hot joint on a Sunday and when had we better?

I suppose you know that ill health has obliged us to give up Housekeeping, but we have an asylum at the very next door—only twenty four inches further from Town, which is not material in a country expedition—where a Table D'Hote is kept for us, without trouble on our parts—and we adjourn after dinner when one of the old world (old friends) drops casually down among us. Come and find us out, and seal our judicious change with your approbation, whenever the whim bites or the sun prompts, no need of prenouncement, for we are sure to be at home.

I keep putting off the subject of my answer. In truth I am not in spirits at present to see Mr Murray on such a business, but pray give him my acknowledgements and an assurance that I should like at least one of his proposals, as I have so much additional matter for the Specimens, as might make two volumes in all, or One (new edition) with omission of such better known authors as Beaumont and Fletcher, Jonson &c.

But we are both in trouble at present, a very dear young friend of ours, who spent her Christmas holydays here, was taken very dangerously ill with a fever, from which she is very precariously recovering, and I expect a summons to fetch her, when she is well enough to bear the journey, from *Bury*. It is Emma Isola, whom we first got acquainted with at our first acquaintance with your Sister at Cambridge and she has been partially an inmate with us, and of late years more extensively, ever since. While she is in this danger, and till she is out of it, and here in a probable way to recovery, I feel I have no spirits for an engagement of any kind. It has been a terrible shock

to us. Make my handsomest apologies for the present to Mr Murray. Our very kindest loves to Mrs Ayrton and the Ayrtonets. I am sure the "*status*" in which I found her was much better than any thing I could have expected, and 'tis something not to retrograde. But we sincerely wish *that* improved—for her consolation and yours, remember how much longer poor Lot's wife—(a better man than you)—has been *in statue quo.* Vide Sandys' Travels in the East.

Your unforgotten, C. LAMB.

DI. TO MRS WILLIAMS

Enfield, Monday, 22 March.

Dear Madam,—Once more I have to return you thanks for a very kind letter. It has gladdened us very much to hear that we may have hope to see our young friend so soon, and through your kind nursing so well recovered. I sincerely hope that your own health and spirits will not have been shaken: you have had a sore trial indeed, and greatly do we feel indebted to you for all which you have undergone. If I hear nothing from you in the mean time, I shall secure myself a place in the Cornwallis Coach for Monday. It will not be at all necessary that I shall be met at Bury, as I can well find my way to the Rectory, and I beg that you will not inconvenience yourselves by such attention. Accordingly as I find Miss Isola able to bear the journey, I intend to take the care of her by the same stage or by chaises perhaps, dividing the journey; but exactly as you shall judge fit. It is our misfortune that long journeys do not agree with my sister, who would else have taken this care upon herself, perhaps more properly. It is quite out of the question to rob you of the services of any of your domestics. I cannot think of it. But if in your opinion a female attendant would be requisite on the journey, and if you or Mr Williams

would feel *more comfortable* by her being in charge of two, I will most gladly engage one of her nurses or any young persons near you, that you can recommend; for my object is to remove her in the way that shall be most satisfactory to yourselves.

On the subject of the young people that you are interesting yourselves about, I will have the pleasure to talk to you, when I shall see you. I live almost out of the world and out of the sphere of being useful; but no pains of mine shall be spared, if but a prospect opens of doing a service. Could I do all I wish, and I indeed have grown helpless to myself and others, it must not satisfy the arrears of obligation I owe to Mr Williams and yourself for all your kindness.

I beg you will turn in your mind and consider in what most comfortable way Miss Isola can leave your house, and I will implicitly follow your suggestions. What you have done for her can never be effaced from our memories, and I would have you part with her in the way that would best satisfy yourselves.

I am afraid of impertinently extending my letter, else I feel I have not said half what I would say. So, dear madam, till I have the pleasure of seeing you both, of whose kindness I have heard so much before, I respectfully take my leave with our kindest love to your poor patient and most sincere regards for the health and happiness of Mr Williams and yourself. May God bless you.

CH. LAMB.

DII. TO THE SAME

Enfield, April 2, 1830.

Dear Madam,—I have great pleasure in letting you know Miss Isola has suffered very little from fatigue on her long journey. I am ashamed to say that I came home rather the more tired of the two, but I am

a very unpractised traveller. She has had two tolerable nights' sleep since, and is decidedly not worse than when we left you. I remembered the magnesia according to your directions, and promise that she shall be kept very quiet, never forgetting that she is still an invalid. We found my sister very well in health, only a little impatient to see her; and, after a few hysterical tears for gladness, all was comfortable again. We arrived from Epping between five and six. The accidents of our journey were trifling, but you bade me tell them. We had then in the coach a rather talkative gentleman, but very civil all the way, and took up a servant maid at Stanford, going to a sick mistress. To the latter a participation in the hospitalities of your nice rusks and sandwiches proved agreeable, as it did to my companion, who took merely a sip of the weakest wine and water with them. The former engaged in a discourse for full twenty minutes on the probable advantages of steam carriages, which being merely problematical I bore my part in with some credit, in spite of my totally unengineer-like faculties. But when somewhere about Stanstead he put an unfortunate question to me as to the probability of its turning out a good turnip season, and when I, who am still [less] of an agriculturist than a steam philosopher, not knowing a turnip from a potato ground, innocently made answer that I believed it depended very much upon boiled legs of mutton, my unlucky reply set Miss Isola a laughing to a degree that disturbed her tranquillity for the only moment in our journey. I am afraid my credit sank very low with my other fellow-traveller, who had thought he had met with a well-informed passenger, which is an accident so desirable in a stage-coach. We were rather less communicative, but still friendly, the rest of the way.

How I employed myself between Epping and Enfield, the poor verses in the front of my paper

may inform you, which you may please to christen an Acrostic in a Cross Road, and which I wish were worthier of the lady they refer to; but I trust you will plead my pardon to her on a subject so delicate as a lady's good *name*. Your candour must acknowledge that they are written straight. And now, dear Madam, I have left myself hardly space to express my sense of the friendly reception I found at Fornham. Mr Williams will tell you that we had the pleasure of a slight meeting with him on the road, where I could almost have told him, but that it seemed ungracious, that such had been your hospitality that I scarcely missed the good master of the family at Fornham, though heartily I should have rejoiced to have made a little longer acquaintance with him. I will say nothing of our deeper obligations to both of you, because I think that we agreed at Fornham that gratitude may be over-exacted on the part of the obliging, and over-expressed on the part of the obliged, person.

My sister and Miss Isola join in respects to Mr Williams and yourself, and I beg to be remembered kindly to the Miss Hammonds and the two Gentlemen whom I had the good fortune to meet at your house. I have not forgotten the election in which you are interesting yourself, and the little that I can I will do.

Miss Isola will have the pleasure of writing to you next week, and we shall hope, at your leisure, to hear of your own health, &c. I am, dear Madam, with great respect, your obliged,

CHARLES LAMB.

DIII. TO THE SAME

Enfield, Good Friday [1830].

Dear Madam,—I do assure you that your verses gratified me very much, and my sister is quite *proud* of them. For the first time in my life I congratulated

myself upon the shortness and meanness of my name. Had it been Schwartzenberg or Esterhazy, it would have put you to some puzzle. I am afraid I shall sicken you of acrostics, but this last was written *to order*. I beg you to have inserted in your country paper something like this advertisement: "To the nobility, gentry, and others, about Bury.—C. Lamb respectfully informs his friends and the public in general, that he is leaving off business in the acrostic line, as he is going into an entirely new line. Rebuses and Charades done as usual, and upon the old terms. Also, Epitaphs to suit the memory of any person deceased."

I thought I had adroitly escaped the rather unpliable name of "Williams," curtailing your poor daughters to their proper surnames; but it seems you would not let me off so easily. If these trifles amuse you, I am paid. Though really 'tis an operation too much like—"A, apple-pie; B, bit it." To make amends, I request leave to lend you the "Excursion," and to recommend, in particular, the "Churchyard Stories"; in the seventh book, I think. They will strengthen the tone of your mind after its weak diet on acrostics.

Miss Isola is writing, and will tell you that we are going on very comfortably. Her sister is just come. She blames my last verses, as being more written on Mr Williams than on yourself; but how should I have parted whom a superior Power has brought together? I beg you will jointly accept of our best respects, and pardon your obsequious if not troublesome correspondent, C. L.

P.S.—I am the worst folder-up of a letter in the world, except certain Hottentots, in the land of Caffre, who never fold up their letters at all, writing very badly upon skins, &c.

DIV. TO THE SAME

Enfield, Tuesday [April 21, 1830].

Dear Madam,—I have ventured upon some lines, which combine my old acrostic talent (which you first found out) with my new profession of epitaph-monger. As you did not please to say, when you would die, I have left a blank space for the date. May kind heaven be a long time in filling it up. At least you cannot say that these lines are not about you, though not much to the purpose. We were very sorry to hear that you have not been very well, and hope that a little excursion may revive you. Miss Isola is thankful for her added day; but I verily think she longs to see her young friends once more, and will regret less than ever the end of her holydays. She cannot be going on more quietly than she is doing here, and you will perceive amendment.

I hope all her little commissions will be brought home to your satisfaction. When she returns, we purpose seeing her to Epping on her journey. We have had our proportion of fine weather and some pleasant walks, and she is stronger, her appetite good, but less wolfish than at first, which we hold a good sign. I hope Mr Wing will approve of its abatement. She desires her very kindest respects to Mr Williams and yourself, and wishes to rejoin you. My sister and myself join in respect, and pray tell Mr Donne, with our compliments, that we shall be disappointed, if we do not see him.

This letter being very neatly written, I am very unwilling that Emma should club any of her disproportionate scrawl to deface it.

Your obliged servant,

C. Lamb.

Mrs Williams,
W. B. Donne, Esq.,
Matteshall, East Dereham, Norfolk.

DV. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

May 10th, 1830.

Dear Southey,—My friend Hone, whom you would like *for a friend*, I found deeply impressed with your generous notice of him in your beautiful *Life of Bunyan*, which I am just now full of. He has written to you for leave to publish a certain good-natured letter. I write not this to enforce his request, for we are fully aware that the refusal of such publication would be quite consistent with all that is good in your character. Neither he nor I expect it from you, nor exact it; but if you would consent to it, you would oblige me by it, as well as him. He is just now in a critical situation: kind friends have opened a coffee-house for him in the City, but their means have not extended to the purchase of coffee-pots, credit for Reviews, newspapers, and other paraphernalia. So I am sitting in the skeleton of a possible divan. What right I have to interfere, you best know. Look on me as a dog who went once temporarily insane, and bit you, and now begs for a crust. Will you set your wits to a dog?

Our object is to open a subscription, which my friends of the *Times* are most willing to forward for him, but think that a leave from you to publish would aid it.

But not an atom of respect or kindness will or shall it abate in either of us if you decline it. Have this strongly in your mind.

Those *Every-Day* and *Table* Books will be a treasure a hundred years hence, but they have failed to make Hone's fortune.

Here his wife and all his children are about me, gaping for coffee customers; but how should they come in, seeing no pot boiling!

Enough of Hone. I saw Coleridge a day or two since. He has had some severe attack, not paralytic; but if I had not heard of it I should not have found

it out. He looks, and especially speaks, strong. How are all the Wordsworths and all the Southeys? whom I am obliged to you if you have not brought up haters of the name of

C. Lamb.

P.S.—I have gone lately into the acrostic line. I find genius (such as I had) declines with me, but I get clever. Do you know any body that wants charades, or such things, for Albums? I do 'em at so much a sheet. Perhaps an epigram (not a very happy-gram) I did for a school-boy yesterday may amuse. I pray Jove he may not get a flogging for any false quantity; but 'tis, with one exception, the only Latin verses I have made for forty years; and I did it "to order."

CUIQUE SUUM

Adsciscit sibi divitias et opes alienas
  Fur, rapiens, spolians, quod mihi, quodque tibi,
Proprium erat, temnens hæc verba, Meumque, Tuumque;
  Omne Suum est. Tandem cuique suum tribuit,
Dat laqueo collum; vestes, vah! carnifici dat;
  Sese Diabolo, sic bene; Cuique suum.

I write from Hone's; therefore Mary cannot send her love to Mrs Southey, but I do.

Yours ever, C. L.

DVI. TO BASIL MONTAGU

Dear B. M.,—You are a kind soul of yourself, and need no spurring, but if you can help a worthy man you will have *two worthy men* obliged to you. I am writing from Hone's possible Coffee House, which must answer, if he can find means to open it, which unfortunately flag—We purpose a little sub-

scription—but I know how tender a subject the pocket is—Your advice may be important to him.

Yours most truly,
C. LAMB.

This is a letter of business, so I wont send unseasonable Love to Mrs Montague and the both good Proctors.

DVII. TO EDWARD MOXON

[May 12, 1830.]

Dear M.,—I dined with your and my Rogers, at Mr Cary's, yesterday. Cary consulted me on the proper bookseller to offer a lady's MS. novel to. I said I would write to *you*. But I wish you would call on the translator of Dante, at the British Museum, and talk with him. He is the pleasantest of clergymen. I told him of all Rogers's handsome behaviour to you, and you are already no stranger. Go! I made Rogers laugh about your Nightingale Sonnet, not having heard one. 'Tis a good sonnet, notwithstanding. You shall have the books shortly.

C. L.

DVIII. TO VINCENT NOVELLO

Friday [May 14, 1830].

Dear Novello,—Mary hopes you have not forgot you are to spend a day with us on Wednesday. That it may be a long one, cannot you secure places now for Mrs Novello, yourself, and the Clarkes? We have just table room for four. Five make my good landlady fidgetty; six, to begin to fret; seven, to approximate to fever-point. But, seriously, we shall prefer four to two or three. We shall have from half-past ten to six, when the coach goes off to scent the country. And pray write *now*, to say

you do so come, for dear Mrs Westwood else will be on the tenters of Incertitude. C. L.

Vincent Novello, Esq.,
66, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

DIX. TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Enfield. Thursday.

Dear Ayrton,

Novello paid us a visit yesterday, and I very much wished you with us. Our conversation was principally, as you may suppose, upon *Music*: and he desiring me to give him my real opinion respecting the distinct grades of excellence in all the Eminent Composers of the Italian, German, and English Schools, I have done it, rather to oblige him, than from any over weening opinion I have of my own judgement in that science. Such as it is I submit it to better critics, and am,

Dear Ayrton,

Yours sincerely,

CH. LAMB.

P.S.

You will find the Essay over leaf—that is to say, if you look for it there.

FREE THOUGHTS ON SEVERAL EMINENT COMPOSERS

Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart,
Just as the whim bites. For my part,
I do not care a farthing candle
For either of them, nor for Handel
Cannot a man live free and easy,
Without admiring Pergolesi?
Or thro' the world with comfort go,
That never heard of Doctor Blow?
So help me God, I hardly have;
And yet I eat, and drink, and shave,
Like other people, if you watch it,
And know no more of Stave or Crotchet,

Than did the primitive Peruvians,
Or those old ante-queer-Diluvians
That lived in the unwash'd world with Tubal,
Before that dirty Blacksmith Jubal,
By stroke on anvil, or by summ'at,
Found out, to his great surprise, the gamut.
I care no more for Cimerosa,
Than he did for Salvator Rosa,
Being no painter; and bad luck
Be mine, if I can bear that Gluck.
Old Tycho Brahe, and modern Herschel,
Had something in 'em: but who's Purcel?
The devil, with his foot so cloven,
For aught I care, may take Beethoven;
And, if the bargain does not suit,
I'll throw him Weber in to boot.
There's not the splitting of a splinter
To chuse 'twixt *him last named*, and Winter.
Of Doctor Pepuzch old Queen Dido
Knew just as much, God knows, as I do,
I would not go four miles to visit
Sebastian Bach—or Batch—which is it?
No more I would for Bononcini.
As for Novello, and Rossini,
I shall not say a word to grieve 'em,
Because they're living. So I leave 'em!

CHS. LAMB.

DX. TO VINCENT NOVELLO

About May 20, 1830.

Dear N.,—Pray write immediately, to say, "The book has come safe." I am curious not so much for the autographs as for that bit of the hair-brush. I enclose a cinder, which belonged to *Shield* when he was poor, and lit his own fires. Any memorial of a great musical genius, I know, is acceptable; and Shield has his merits, though Clementi, in my opinion, is far above him in the *sostenuto*.

Mr Westwood desires his compliments, and begs to present you with a nail that came out of Jomelli's coffin, who is buried at Naples.

DXI. TO WILLIAM HONE

May 21, 1830.

Dear Hone,—I thought you would be pleased to see this letter. Pray if you have time call on Novello, No. 66, Great Queen St., I am anxious to learn whether he received his album I sent on Friday by our nine o'clock morning stage. If not, beg him inquire at the *Old Bell*, Holborn.

CHARLES LAMB.

Southey will see in the *Times* all we proposed omitting is omitted.

DXII. TO MRS HAZLITT

May 24th, 1830.

Mary's love? Yes. Mary Lamb is quite well.

Enfield, Saturday.

Dear Sarah,—I found my way to Northaw on Thursday, and saw a very good woman behind a counter, who says also that you are a very good lady. I did not accept her offered glass of wine, (home-made, I take it,) but craved a cup of ale, with which I seasoned a slice of cold lamb, from a sandwich box, which I ate in her back parlour, and proceeded for Berkhamstead, &c.; lost myself over a heath, and had a day's pleasure. I wish you could walk as I do, and as you used to do. I am sorry to find you are so poorly; and, now I have found my way, I wish you back at Goody Tomlinson's. What a pretty village 'tis! I should have come sooner, but was waiting a summons to Bury. Well, it came; and I found the good parson's lady (he was from home) exceedingly hospitable.

Poor Emma, the first moment we were alone, took me into a corner, and said, "Now, pray, don't *drink*; do check yourself after dinner, for my sake, and when we get home to Enfield you shall drink as much as

ever you please, and I won't say a word about it." How I behaved, you may guess, when I tell you that Mrs Williams and I have written acrostics on each other, and she hoped that she should have "no reason to regret Miss Isola's recovery, by its depriving *her* of our begun correspondence." Emma stayed a month with us, and has gone back (in tolerable health) to her long home, for *she* comes not again for a twelvemonth. I amused Mrs Williams with an occurrence on our road to Enfield. We travelled with one of those troublesome fellow-passengers in a stage coach, that is called a well-inform'd man. For twenty miles we discoursed about the properties of steam, probabilities of carriage by ditto, till all my science, and more than all, was exhausted, and I was thinking of escaping my torment by getting up on the outside, when, getting into Bishops Stortford, my gentleman, spying some farming land, put an unlucky question to me: "What sort of a crop of turnips do you think we shall have this year?" Emma's eyes turned to me, to know what in the world I could have to say; and she burst into a violent fit of laughter, maugre her pale, serious cheeks, when, with the greatest gravity, I replied, that "it depends, I believe, upon boiled legs of mutton." This clenched our conversation; and my gentleman, with a face half wise, half in scorn, troubled us with no more conversation, scientific or philosophical, for the remainder of our journey. Ayrton was here yesterday, and as *learned* to the full as my fellow-traveller. What a pity that he will spoil a wit and a devilish pleasant fellow (as he is) by wisdom. He talked on music, and by having read Hawkins and Burney recently, I was enabled to talk of names, and show more knowledge than he had suspected I possessed; and in the end he begged me to shape my thoughts upon paper, which I did after he was gone, and sent him

FREE THOUGHTS ON SOME EMINENT COMPOSERS

> Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart
> Just as the whim bites. For my part,
> I do not care a farthing candle
> For either of them, or for Handel, &c.

Martin Burney is as good and as odd as ever. We had a dispute about the word "heir," which I contended was pronounced like "air." He said that might be in common parlance; or that we might so use it, speaking of the "Heir at Law," a comedy; but that in the law courts it was necessary to give it a full aspiration, and to say *Hayer*; he thought it might even vitiate a cause, if a counsel pronounced it otherwise. In conclusion, he "would consult Serjeant Wilde"; who gave it against him. Sometimes he falleth into the water; sometimes into the fire. He came down here, and insisted on reading Virgil's "Eneid" all through with me, (which he did,) because a Counsel must know Latin. Another time he read out all the Gospel of St John, because Biblical quotations are very emphatic in a Court of Justice. A third time he would carve a fowl, which he did very ill-favouredly, because "we did not know how indispensable it was for a barrister to do all those things well? Those little things were of more consequence than we supposed." So he goes on, harassing about the way to prosperity, and losing it; with a long head, but somewhat a wrong one—harum-scarum. Why does not his guardian angel look to him? He deserves one: may be he has tired him out.

I am tired with this long scrawl, but I thought in your exile you might like a letter. Commend me to all the wonders in Derbyshire; and tell the devil I humbly kiss my—hand to him.

Yours ever, C. Lamb.

Mrs Hazlitt,
Mr Broomhead's, St Anne's Square, Buxton.

DXIII. TO DR ASBURY

May 1830.

Dear Sir,—Some draughts and boluses have been brought here which we conjecture were meant for the young lady whom you saw this morning, tho' they are labelled for

MISS ISOLA LAMB.

No such person is known on the Chase side, and she is fearful of taking medicines, which may have been made up for another patient. She begs me to say that she was born an *Isola* and christen'd *Emma*. Moreover that she is an Italian by birth, and that her ancestors were from Isola Bella (Fair Island) in the Kingdom of Naples. She has never changed her name, and rather mournfully adds that she has no prospect at present of doing so. She is literally ISOLA, or single, at present. Therefore she begs that the obnoxious monosyllable may be omitted on future phials,—an innocent syllable enough you'll say, but she has no claim to it. It is the bitterest pill of the seven you have sent her. When a Lady loses her good *name*, what is to become of her? Well, she must swallow it as well as she can, but begs the dose may not be repeated.

Your faithfully, CHARLES LAMB (not Isola).

DXIV. TO MRS HAZLITT

June 3, 1830.

Dear Sarah,—I named your thought about William to his father, who expressed such horror and aversion to the idea of his singing in public, that I cannot meddle in it directly or indirectly. Ayrton is a kind fellow; and if you chuse to consult him by letter, or otherwise, he will give you the best advice, I am sure, very readily. *I have no doubt that Mr Burney's objection to interfering was the same with mine.* With thanks for your pleasant long letter, which is

not that of an invalid, and sympathy for your sad sufferings,

I remain, in haste,
Yours truly,
Mary's kindest love. [No Signature.]
Mrs Hazlitt, at Mr Broomhead's,
St Anne's Square, Buxton.

DXV. TO WILLIAM HONE

Enfield, 17 June, 1830.

I hereby impower Matilda Hone to superintend daily the putting into the twopenny post the *Times* newspaper of the day before, directed "Mr Lamb, Enfield," which shall be held a *full and sufficient direction*: the said insertion to commence on Monday morning next. And I do engage to pay to William Hone, Coffee and Hotel Man, the quarterly sum of £1, to be paid at the ordinary Quarter days, or thereabout, for the reversion of the said paper, commencing with the 24th inst., or Feast of John the Baptist; the intervening days to be held and considered as nothing. C. LAMB.

Vivant Coffee, Coffee—pot—que!
Mr Hone,
Coffee-house and Hotel,
13, *Gracechurch Street, London.*

DXVI. TO BERNARD BARTON

June 28, 1830.

Dear B. B.,—Could you dream of my publishing without sending a copy to you? You will find somethings new to you in the volume, particularly the Translations. Moxon will send to you the moment it is out. He is the young poet of Christmas, whom the Author of the Pleasures of Memory has set up in the book-vending business with a volunteer'd loan of £500

—such munificence is rare to an almost Stranger. But Rogers, I am told, has done many good-natured things of this nature.

I need not say how glad to see A. K. and Lucy we should have been,—and still shall be, if it be practicable. Our direction is Mr Westwood's, Chase Side, Enfield, but alas, I know not theirs. We can give them a bed. Coaches come daily from the Bell, Holborn.

You will see that I am worn to the poetical dregs, condescending to Acrostics, which are nine fathom beneath Album verses—but they were written at the request of the Lady where our Emma is, to whom I paid a visit in April to bring home Emma for a change of air after a severe illness, in which she had been treated like a daughter by the good Parson and his whole family. She has since return'd to her occupation. I thought on you in Suffolk, but was forty miles from Woodbridge. I heard of you the other day from Mr Pulham of the India House.

Long live King William the 4th.

S. T. C. says we have had wicked kings, foolish kings, wise kings (but few) but never till now have we had a Blackguard king.

Charles 2nd was profligate, but a Gentleman.

I have nineteen Letters to dispatch this leisure Sabbath for Moxon to send about with Copies—so you will forgive me short measure,—and believe me

Yours Ever C. L.

Pray do let us see your Quakeresses if possible.

DXVII. TO WILLIAM HONE

[July 1, 1830.]

Pray let Matilda keep my newspapers till you hear from me, as we are meditating a town residence.

C. Lamb.

Let her keep them as the apple of her eye.

Mr Hone,

13, *Gracechurch Street.*

DXVIII. TO BERNARD BARTON

August 30th, 1830.

Dear B. B.,—My address is 34, Southampton Buildings, Holborn. For God's sake, do not let me be pester'd with Annuals. They are all rogues who edit them, and something else who write in them. I am still alone, and very much out of sorts, and cannot spur up my mind to writing. The sight of one of those Year Books makes me sick. I get nothing by any of 'em, not even a Copy.

Thank you for your warm interest about my little volume, for the critics on which I care the 5 hundred thousandth part of the tythe of a half-farthing. I am too old a Militant for that. How noble, tho', in R. S. to come forward for an old friend, who had treated him so unworthily.

Moxon has a shop without customers, I a Book without readers. But what a clamour against a poor Collection of Album verses, as if we had put forth an Epic. I cannot scribble a long Letter—I am, when not at foot, very desolate, and take no interest in any thing, scarce hate any thing but annuals. I am in an interregnum of thought and feeling.

What a beautiful Autumn morning this is, if it was but with me as in times past when the candle of the Lord shined round me——

I cannot even muster enthusiasm to admire the French heroism.

In better times I hope we may some day meet, and discuss an old poem or two. But if you'd have me not sick no more of Annuals.

C. L., Ex-Elia.

Love to Lucy and A. K. always.

DXIX. TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[Nov. 8, 1830.]

Tears are for lighter griefs. Man weeps the doom
That seals a single victim to the tomb.
But when Death riots, when with whelming sway
Destruction sweeps a family away;
When Infancy and Youth, a huddled mass,
All in an instant to oblivion pass,
And Parents' hopes are crush'd; what lamentation
Can reach the depth of such a desolation?
Look upward, Feeble Ones! look up, and trust
That He, who lays this mortal frame in dust,
Still hath the immortal Spirit in His keeping.
In Jesus' sight they are not dead, but sleeping.

Dear N,—will these lines do? I despair of better. Poor Mary is in a deplorable state here at Enfield.

Love to all, C. LAMB.

DXX. TO GEORGE DYER

Dec. 20, 1830.

Dear Dyer,—I should have written before to thank you for your kind letter, written with your own hand. It glads us to see your writing. It will give you pleasure to hear that after so much illness we are in tolerable health and spirits once more. Poor Enfield, that has been so peaceable hitherto, has caught the inflammatory fever; the tokens are upon her; and a great fire was blazing last night in the barns and haystacks of a farmer, about half a mile from us. Where will these things end? There is no doubt of its being the work of some ill-disposed rustic; but how is he to be discovered? They go to work in the dark with strange chemical preparations, unknown to our forefathers. There is not even a dark lantern, to have a chance of detecting these Guy Fauxes. We are past the iron age, and are got into the fiery age, undreamed of by Ovid. You are lucky in Clifford's Inn, where I think you have few ricks or stacks worth the burning. Pray, keep as little corn by you as you can for fear of the worst.

It was never good times in England since the poor began to speculate upon their condition. Formerly they jogged on with as little reflection as horses. The whistling ploughman went cheek by jowl with his brother that neighed. Now the biped carries a box of phosphorus in his leather breeches, and in the dead of night the half-illuminated beast steals his magic potion into a cleft in a barn, and half the country is grinning with new fires. Farmer Graystock said something to the touchy rustic, that he did not relish, and he writes his distaste in flames. What a power to intoxicate his crude brains, just muddlingly awake to perceive that something is wrong in the social system,—what a hellish faculty above gunpowder! Now the rich and poor are fairly pitted. We shall see who can hang or burn fastest. It is not always revenge that stimulates these kindlings. There is a love of exerting mischief. Think of a disrespected clod that was trod into earth, that was nothing, on a sudden by damned arts refined into an exterminating angel, devouring the fruits of the earth and their growers in a mass of fire; what a new existence! What a temptation above Lucifer's! Would clod be any thing but a clod if he could resist it? Why, here was a spectacle last night for a whole country, a bonfire visible to London, alarming her guilty towers, and shaking the Monument with an ague fit, all done by a little vial of phosphor in a clown's fob. How he must grin, and shake his empty noddle in clouds! The Vulcanian epicure! Alas! can we ring the bells backward? Can we unlearn the arts that pretend to civilize, and then burn the world? There is a march of science; but who shall beat the drums for its retreat? Who shall persuade the boor that phosphor will not ignite? Seven goodly stacks of hay, with corn-barns proportionable, lie smoking ashes and chaff, which man and beast would sputter

out and reject like those apples of asphaltes and bitumen. The food for the inhabitants of earth will quickly disappear. Hot rolls may say, "Fuimus panes, fuit quartern-loaf, et ingens gloria apple-pasty-orum." That the good old munching system may last thy time and mine, good un-incendiary George, is the devout prayer of thine,

To the last crust, C. LAMB.

DXXI. TO REV. HENRY F. CARY

13 April, 1831.

Dear C. — I am *daily* for this week expecting Wordsworth, who will not name a day. I have been expecting him by months and by weeks; but he has reduced the hope within the seven fractions hebdomidal of this hebdoma. Therefore I am sorry I cannot see you on Thursday. I think within a week or two I shall be able to invite myself some day for a day, but we hermits with difficulty poke out of our shells. Within that ostraceus retirement I meditate not unfrequently on you. My sister's kindest remembrances to you both. C. L.

DXXII. TO BERNARD BARTON

April 30th, 1831.

Vir bone!—recepi literas tuas amicissimas, et in mentem venit responsuro mihi, vel raro, vel nunquam, inter nos intercedisse Latinam linguam, organum rescribendi, loquendive. Epistolæ tuæ, Plinianis elegantiis (supra quod TREMULO deceat) refertæ, tam a verbis Plinianis adeo abhorrent, ut ne vocem quamquam (Romanam scilicet) habere videaris, quam "ad canem," ut aiunt, "rejectare possis." Forsan desuetudo Latinissandi ad vernaculam linguam usitandam, plusquam opus sit, coegit. Per adagia quædam nota, et in ore omnium pervulgata, ad Latinitatis perditæ recuperationem revocare te institui.

Felis in abaco est, et ægrè videt.

Omne quod splendet nequaquam aurum putes.

Imponas equo mendicum, equitabit idem ad diabolum.

Fur commodè a fure prenditur.

O MARIA, MARIA, valdé CONTRARIA, quomodo crescit hortulus tuus?

Nunc majora canamus.

Thomas, Thomas, de Islington, uxorem duxit die nuperâ Dominicâ. Reduxit domum posterâ. Succedenti baculum emit. Postridie ferit illam. Ægrescit illa subsequenti. Proximâ (nempe Veneris) est Mortua. Plurimum gestiit Thomas, quòd appropinquanti Sabbato efferenda sit.

Horner quidam Johannulus in angulo sedebat, artocreas quasdam deglutiens. Inseruit pollices, pruna varia evellens, et magnâ voce exclamavit "Dii boni, quàm bonus puer fio!"

Diddle-diddle-dumkins! meus unicus filius Johannes cubitum ivit, integris braccis, caligâ unâ tantum, indutus. Diddle-diddle, &c. DA CAPO.

Hic adsum saltans Joannula. Cum nemo adsit mihi, semper resto sola.

Ænigma mihi hoc solvas, et Œdipus fies.

Quâ ratione assimulandus sit equus TREMULO?

Quippe cui tota communicatio sit per HAY et NEIGH, juxta consilium illud Dominicum. "Fiat omnis communicatio vestra YEA et NAY."

In his nugis caram diem consumo, dum invigilo valetudini carioris nostræ Emmæ, quæ apud nos jamdudum ægrotat. Salvere vos jubet mecum Maria mea, ipsa integrâ valetudine. ELIA.

Ab agro Enfeldiense datum, Aprilis, nescio quibus Calendis—Davus sum, non Calendarius.

P.S.—Perdita in toto est Billa Reformatura.

DXXIII. TO REV. HENRY F. CARY

[1831.]

Assidens est mihi bona soror, Euripiden evolvens, donum vestrum, carissime Cary, pro quo gratias agimus, lecturi atque iterum lecturi idem. Pergratus est liber ambobus, nempe "Sacerdotis Commiserationis," sacrum opus a te ipso Humanissimæ Religionis Sacerdote dono datum. Lachrymantes gavisuri sumus; est ubi dolor fiat voluptas; nec semper dulce mihi est ridere; aliquando commutandum est he! he! he! cum heu! heu! heu!

A Musis Tragicis me non penitus abhorruisse testis sit Carmen Calamitosum, nescio quo autore linguâ prius vernaculâ scriptum, et nuperrimè a me ipso Latine versum scilicet, "Tom Tom of Islington." Tenuistine?

> "Thomas Thomas de Islington,
> Uxorem duxit Die quâdam Solis,
> Abduxit domum sequenti die,
> Emit baculum subsequenti,
> Vapulat illa posterâ,
> Ægrotat succedenti, Mortua fit crastinâ."

Et miro gaudio afficitur Thomas luce posterâ quod subsequenti (nempe, Dominicâ) uxor sit efferenda.

> "En Iliades Domesticas!
> En circulum calamitatum!
> Planè hebdomadalem tragœdiam."

I nunc et confer Euripiden vestrum his luctibus, hâc morte uxoriâ; confer Alcesten! Hecuben! quas non antiquas Heroinas Dolorosas.

Suffundor genas lachrymis tantas strages revolvens. Quid restat nisi quod Tecum Tuam Caram salutamus ambosque valere jubeamus, nosmet ipsi bene valentes.

ELIA.

Datum ab agro Enfeldiensi, Maii die sextâ, 1831.

DXXIV. TO EDWARD MOXON

May 12, [1831.]

Dear Moxon,—I have brought my sister to Enfield, being sure that she had no hope of recovery in London. Her state of mind is deplorable beyond any example. I almost fear whether she has strength at her time of life ever to get out of it. Here she must be nursed, and neither see nor hear of any thing in the world out of her sick chamber. The mere hearing that Southey had called at our lodgings totally upset her. Pray see him, or hear of him at Mr Rickman's, and excuse my not writing to him. I dare not write or receive a letter in her presence; every little talk so agitates her. Westwood will receive any letter for me, and give it me privately.

Pray assure Southey of my kindliest feelings towards him; and if you do not see him, send this to him.

Kindest remembrances to your sister, and believe me ever yours,

C. LAMB.

Remember me kindly to the Allsops.

DXXV. TO JOHN FORSTER

[? Aug 4, 1831.]

My dear Boy.—Scamper off with this to Dilke and get it in for to-morrow; then we shall have two things in in the first week.

YOUR LAUREAT.

DXXVI. TO EDWARD MOXON

August, 1831.

Dear M.,—The *R.A.* here memorized was George Dawe, whom I knew well, and heard many anecdotes of, from DANIELS and WESTALL, at H. Rogers's; *to each of them* it will be well to send a magazine in my

name. It will fly like wildfire among the Royal Academicians and artists. Could you get hold of Procter?—his chambers are in Lincoln's Inn, at Montague's; or of Janus Weathercock?—both of their *prose* is capital. Don't encourage poetry. The "Peter's Net" does not intend funny things only. All is fish. And leave out the sickening "Elia" at the end. Then it may comprise letters and characters addressed to Peter; but a signature forces it to be all characteristic of the one man Elia, or the one man, Peter, which cramped me formerly. I have agreed *not* for my sister to know the subjects I choose till the magazine comes out: so beware of speaking of 'em, or writing about 'em, save generally. Be particular about this warning. Can't you drop in some afternoon, and take a bed? The *Athenæum* has been hoaxed with some exquisite poetry, that was, two or three months ago, in "Hone's Book." I like your first Number capitally. But is it not small? Come and see us, week-day if possible.

Send or bring me Hone's Number for August. The anecdotes of E. and of G. D. are substantially true; what does Elia (or Peter) care for dates?

The poem I mean is in "Hone's Book," as far back as April. I do not know who wrote it; but 'tis a poem I envy,—*that* and Montgomery's "Last Man": I envy the writers, because I feel I could have done something like them.

C. L.

DXXVII. TO THE SAME

One o'clock.

This instant received, this instant I answer your's—Dr Cresswell has one copy, which I cannot just now re-demand, because at his desire I have sent on "Satan" to him, which when he ask'd for, I frankly told him, was imputed a lampoon on him!!! I have

sent it him, and cannot, till we come to explanation, go to him or send.

But on the faith of a gentleman, you shall have it back some day *for Another*—The 3 I send. I think 2 of the blunders perfectly immaterial. But your feelings, and I fear *pocket*, is every thing, I have just time to pack this off by the 2 o'clock stage—Yours till we meet.

At all events I behave more gentlemanlike than Emma did, in returning the copies.

Yours till we meet—do come. Bring the Sonnets—
Why not publish 'em—or let another Bookseller?

DXXVIII. TO THE SAME

Sept. 5th, 1831.

Dear M.,—Your letter's contents pleased me. I am only afraid of taxing you. Yet I want a stimulus, or I think I should drag sadly. I shall keep the moneys in trust, till I see you fairly over the next 1st January: then I shall look upon them as earned. No part of your letter gave me more pleasure (no, not the £10, tho' you may grin) than that you will revisit old Enfield, which I hope will be always a pleasant idea to you.

Yours, very faithfully,

C. L.

DXXIX. TO WILLIAM HAZLITT, JR.

[Postmarked Sept. 13, 1831.]

Dear William—We have a sick house, Mrs Westwood's daughter in a fever, and Grandaughter in the meazles, and it is better to see no company just now, but in a week or two we shall be very glad to see you; come at a hazard then, on a week day if you can, because Sundays are stuffd up with friends on both parts of this great ill-mixed family. Your second letter, dated 3d September, came not till Sunday, and we staid at home in

evening in expectation of seeing you. I have turned and twisted what you ask'd me to do in my head, and am obliged to say I can not undertake it—but as a composition for declining it, will you accept some verses which I meditate to be addrest to you on your father, and prefixable to your Life? Write me word that I may have 'em ready against I see you some ten days hence, when I calculate the House will be uninfected. Send your mother's address.

If you are likely to be again at Cheshunt before that time, on second thoughts, drop in here, and consult—

Yours,
C. L.

Not a line is yet written—so say, if I shall do 'em.

[*Endorsed*] W. Hazlitt, Esq.,
15, Wardour Street, Soho.

DXXX. TO EDWARD MOXON

Oct. 24th, 1831.

To address an abdicated monarch is a nice point of breeding. To give him his lost titles is to mock him; to withhold 'em is to wound him. But his minister, who falls with him, may be gracefully sympathetic. I do honestly feel for your diminution of honours, and regret even the pleasing cares which are part and parcel of greatness. Your magnanimous submission, and the cheerful tone of your renunciation, in a letter which, without flattery, would have made an "ARTICLE," and which, rarely as I keep letters, shall be preserved, comfort me a little. Will it please, or plague you, to say that when your parcel came I damn'd it? for my pen was warming in my hand at a ludicrous description of a Landscape of an R.A., which I calculated upon sending you to-morrow, the last day you gave me. Now any one calling in, or a letter coming, puts an end to my writing for the

day. Little did I think that the mandate had gone out, so destructive to my occupation, so relieving to the apprehensions of the whole body of R.A.'s; so you see I had not quitted the ship while a plank was remaining.

To drop metaphors, I am sure you have done wisely. The very spirit of your epistle speaks that you have a weight off your mind. I have one on mine; the cash in hand, which, as —— less truly says, burns in my pocket. I feel queer at returning it, (who does not?) you feel awkward at retaking it, (who ought not.) Is there no middle way of adjusting this fine embarrassment? I think I have hit upon a medium to skin the sore place over, if not quite to heal it. You hinted that there might be something under £10, by and by, accruing to me—*Devil's Money*, (you are sanguine, say £7. 10*s*.); that I entirely renounce, and abjure all future interest in: I insist upon it; and "by him I will not name," I won't touch a penny of it. That will split your loss, one half, and leave me conscientious possessor of what I hold. Less than your assent to this, no proposal will I accept of.

The Rev. Mr ——, whose name you have left illegible (is it *Seagull*?) never sent me any book on Christ's Hospital, by which I could dream that I was indebted to him for a dedication. Did G. D. send his penny tract to me to convert me to Unitarianism? Dear, blundering soul! why I am as old a one Goddite as himself. Or did he think his cheap publication would bring over the Methodists over the way here? However, I'll give it to the pew-opener, in whom I have a little interest, to hand over to the clerk, whose wife she sometimes drinks tea with, for him to lay before the deacon, who exchanges the civility of the hat with him, for to transmit to the minister, who shakes hands with him out of chapel, and he, in all odds, will —— with it.

I wish very much to see you. I leave it to you to come how you will; we shall be very glad (we need not repeat) to see your sister, or sisters, with you; but for you, individually, I will just hint that a dropping in to tea, unlooked for, about five, stopping bread-and-cheese and gin-and-water, is worth a thousand Sundays. I am naturally miserable on a Sunday; but a week-day evening and supper is like old times. Set out *now*, and give no time to deliberation.

P.S.—The second volume of "Elia" is delightful (ly bound, I mean), and quite cheap. Why, man, 'tis a unique!

If I write much more I shall expand into an article, which I cannot afford to let you have so cheap. By the by, to show the perverseness of human will, while I thought I *must* furnish one of those accursed things monthly, it seemed a labour above Hercules's "Twelve" in a year, which were evidently monthly contributions. Now I am emancipated, I feel as if I had a thousand Essays swelling within me. False feelings both!

Your ex-Lampoonist, or Lamb-punnist, from Enfield, October 24, or "last day but one for receiving articles that can be inserted."

DXXXI. TO GEORGE DYER

Feb. 22nd, 1832.

Dear Dyer,—Mr Rogers, and Mr Rogers's friends, are perfectly assured that you never intended any harm by an innocent couplet, and that in the revivification of it by blundering Barker you had no hand whatever. To imagine that at this time of day Rogers broods over a fantastic expression of more than thirty years' standing, would be to suppose him indulging his "Pleasures of Memory" with a vengeance. You never penned a line which for its own sake you need, dying, wish to blot. You mistake

your heart if you think you *can* write a lampoon. Your whips are rods of roses. Your spleen has ever had for its object vices, not the vicious; abstract offences, not the concrete sinner. But you are sensitive, and wince as much at the consciousness of having committed a compliment, as another man would at the perpetration of an affront. But do not lug me into the same soreness of conscience with yourself. I maintain, and will to the last hour, that I never writ of you but *con amore*; that if any allusion was made to your near-sightedness, it was not for the purpose of mocking an infirmity, but of connecting it with scholar-like habits: for is it not erudite and scholarly to be somewhat near of sight before age naturally brings on the malady? You could not then plead the *obrepens senectus*. Did I not moreover make it an apology for a certain *absence*, which some of our friends may have experienced, when you have not on a sudden made recognition of them in a casual street-meeting? And did I not strengthen your excuse for this slowness of recognition, by further accounting morally for the present engagement of your mind in worthy objects? Did I not, in your person, make the handsomest apology for absent-of-mind people that was ever made? If these things be not so, I never knew what I wrote, or meant by my writing, and have been penning libels all my life without being aware of it. Does it follow that I should have exprest myself exactly in the same way of those dear old eyes of yours *now*, now that Father Time has conspired with a hard task-master to put a last extinguisher upon them? I should as soon have insulted the Answerer of Salmasius when he awoke up from his ended task and saw no more with mortal vision. But you are many films removed yet from Milton's calamity. You write perfectly intelligibly. Marry, the letters are not all of the same size or tallness; but that only shows your

proficiency in the *hands*, text, german-hand, court-hand, sometimes law-hand, and affords variety. You pen better than you did a twelvemonth ago; and if you continue to improve, you bid fair to win the golden pen which is the prize at your young gentlemen's academy. But you must be aware of Valpy, and his printing-house, that hazy cave of Trophonius, out of which it was a mercy that you escaped with a glimmer. Beware of MSS. and Variæ Lectiones. Settle the text for once in your mind, and stick to it. You have some years' good sight in you yet, if you do not tamper with it. It is not for you (for *us* I should say) to go poring into Greek contractions, and star-gazing upon slim Hebrew points. We have yet the sight

> Of sun, and moon, and star, throughout the year
> And man and woman.

You have vision enough to discern Mrs Dyer from the other comely gentlewoman who lives up at staircase No. 5; or, if you should make a blunder in the twilight, Mrs Dyer has too much good sense to be jealous for a mere effect of imperfect optics. But don't try to write the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments in the compass of a half-penny; nor run after a midge, or a mote, to catch it; and leave off hunting for needles in bundles of hay, for all these things strain the eyes. The snow is six feet deep in some parts here. I must put on jack-boots to get at the Post-Office with this. It is not good for weak eyes to pore upon snow too much. It lies in drifts. I wonder what its drift is; only that it makes good pancakes, remind Mrs Dyer. It turns a pretty green world into a white one. It glares too much for an innocent colour methinks. I wonder why you think I dislike gilt edges. They set off a letter marvellously. Yours, for instance, looks for all the world like a tablet of curious *hieroglyphics* in a gold frame. But

don't go and lay this to your eyes. You always wrote hieroglyphically, yet not to come up to the mystical notations and conjuring characters of Dr Parr. You never wrote what I call a school-master's hand, like Mrs Clarke; nor a woman's hand, like Southey; nor a missal hand, like Porson; nor an all-of-the-wrong-side sloping hand, like Miss Hayes; nor a dogmatic, Mede-and-Persian, peremptory hand, like Rickman; but you ever wrote what I call a Grecian's hand; what the Grecians write (or used) at Christ's Hospital; such as Whalley would have admired, and Boyer have applauded, but Smith or Atwood (writing-masters) would have horsed you for. Your boy-of-genius hand and your mercantile hand are various. By your flourishes, I should think you never learned to make eagles or corkscrews, or flourish the governors' names in the writing-school; and by the tenour and cut of your letters, I suspect you were never in it at all. By the length of this scrawl you will think I have a design upon your optics; but I have writ as large as I could, out of respect to them; too large, indeed, for beauty. Mine is a sort deputy Grecian's hand; a little better, and more of a worldly hand, than a Grecian's, but still remote from the mercantile. I don't know how it is, but I keep my rank in fancy still since school-days. I can never forget I was a deputy Grecian! And writing to you, or to Coleridge, besides affection, I feel a reverential deference as to Grecians still. I keep my soaring way above the Great Erasmians, yet far beneath the other. Alas! what am I now? What is a Leadenhall clerk, or India pensioner, to a deputy Grecian? How art thou fallen, O Lucifer! Just room for our loves to Mrs D., &c.

C. Lamb.

DXXXII. TO EDWARD MOXON

Feb. 1832.

Dear Moxon,—The snows are ancle-deep, slush, and mire, that 'tis hard to get to the post-office, and cruel to send the maid out. 'Tis a slough of despair, or I should sooner have thanked you for your offer of the "*Life*," which we shall very much like to have, and will return duly. I do not know when I shall be in town, but in a week or two, at farthest, when I will come as far as you, if I can. We are moped to death with confinement within doors. I send you a curiosity of G. Dyer's tender conscience. Between thirty and forty years since, G. published the "Poet's Fate," in which were two very harmless lines about Mr Rogers; but Mr R. not quite approving of them, they were left out in a subsequent edition, 1801. But G. has been worrying about them ever since; if I have heard him once, I have heard him a hundred times, express a remorse proportioned to a consciousness of having been guilty of an atrocious libel. As the devil would have it, a fool they call Barker, in his "Parriana," has quoted the identical two lines, as they stood in some obscure edition anterior to 1801, and the withers of poor G. are again wrung. His letter is a gem; with his poor blind eyes it has been laboured out at six sittings. The history of the couplet is in page 3 of this irregular production, in which every variety of shape and size that letters can be twisted into is to be found. Do show *his* part of it to Mr R. some day. If he has bowels, they must melt at the contrition so queerly charactered of a contrite sinner. G. was born, I verily think, without original sin, but chooses to have a conscience, as every Christian gentleman should have; his dear old face is insusceptible of the twist they call a sneer, yet he is apprehensive of being suspected of that ugly appearance. When he makes a compliment, he

thinks he has given an affront,—a name is personality. But show (no hurry) this unique recantation to Mr R.: 'tis like a dirty pocket-handkerchief, mucked with tears of some indigent Magdalen. There is the impress of sincerity in every pot-hook and hanger; and then the gilt frame to such a pauper picture! It should go into the Museum. I am heartily sorry my Devil does not answer. We must try it a little longer; and, after all, I think I must insist on taking a portion of its loss upon myself. It is too much you should lose by two adventures. You do not say how your general business goes on, and I should very much like to talk over it with you here.

Come when the weather will possibly let you; I want to see the Wordsworths, but I do not much like to be all night away. It is dull enough to be here together, but it is duller to leave Mary; in short, it is painful, and in a flying visit I should hardly catch them. I have no beds for them if they came down, and but a sort of a house to receive them in; yet I shall regret their departure unseen; I feel cramped and straitened every way. Where are they?

We have heard from Emma but once, and that a month ago, and are very anxious for another letter.

You say we have forgot your powers of being serviceable to us. *That* we never shall: I do not know what I should do without you when I want a little commission. Now then: there are left at Miss Buffam's, the "Tales of the Castle," and certain volumes of the "Retrospective Review." The first should be conveyed to Novello's, and the Reviews should be taken to Talfourd's office, ground-floor, east side, Elm Court, Middle Temple, to whom I should have written, but my spirits are wretched; it is quite an effort to write this. So, with the "*Life*," I have cut you out three pieces of service. What can I do for you here, but hope to see you very soon, and think of you with most kindness? I fear to-

morrow, between rains and snows, it would be impossible to expect you, but do not let a practicable Sunday pass. We are always at home.

Mary joins in remembrances to your sister, whom we hope to see in any fine-ish weather, when she'll venture.

Remember us to Allsop, and all the dead people; to whom, and to London, we seem dead.

DXXXIII. TO THE MISSES HUME

[1832.]

Many thanks for the wrap-rascal, but how delicate the insinuating in, into the pocket, of that 3½*d.*, in paper too! Who was it? Amelia, Caroline, Julia, Augusta, or "Scots who have"?

As a set-off to the very handsome present, which I shall lay out in a pot of ale certainly to *her* health, I have paid sixpence for the mend of two button-holes of the coat now return'd. She shall not have to say, "I don't care a button for her."

Adieu, très aimables!

Buttons	6*d.*
Gift	3½
Due from——	2½

which pray accept . . . from your foolish coat-forgetting

C. L.

DXXXIV. TO W. S. LANDOR

9 April, 1832.

Dear Sir,—Pray accept a little volume. 'Tis a legacy from Elia, you'll see. Silver and Gold had he none, but such as he had left he you. I do not know how to thank you for attending to my request about the Album. I thought you would never remember it. Are not you proud and thankful, Emma? Yes; *very, both.* [Signed.] EMMA ISOLA.

Many things I had to say to you, which there was not time for. One, why should I forget? 'tis for

W. S. Landor,
from the engraving by W. Bewick, 1826.

Rose Aylmer, which has a charm I cannot explain. I lived upon it for weeks. Next, I forgot to tell you I knew all your Welsh annoyances, the measureless Beethams. I knew a quarter of a mile of them. Seventeen brothers and sixteen sisters, as they appear to me in memory. There was one of them that used to fix his long legs on my fender, and tell a story of a shark every night, endless, immortal. How have I grudged the salt sea ravener not having had his gorge of him! The shortest of the daughters measured five foot eleven without her shoes. Well, some day we may confer about them. But they were tall. Truly, I have discover'd the longitude. Sir, if you can spare a moment, I should be happy to hear from you. That rogue Robinson, detained your verses till I call'd for them. Don't entrust a bit of prose to the rogue; but believe me,

Your obliged, C. L.

My sister sends her kind regards.

W. S. Landor, Esq.

From Ch. Lamb.

DXXXV. TO MISS FRYER

[? Spring, 1832.]

My dear Miss Fryer,—By desire of Emma I have attempted new words to the old nonsense of Tartar Drum, but with the nonsense the sound and the spirit of the tune are unaccountably gone, and *we* have agreed to discard the new version altogether. As you may be more fastidious in singing more silliness and a string of well sounding images without sense or coherence, Drums of Tartars who are *none* and Tulip trees ten feet high, not to mention spirits in sunbeams, &c. than we are, so you are at liberty to sacrifice an inspiriting movement to a little sense, tho' I like *Little*

Sense less than his vagarying younger sister, *No Sense* so I send them. The fourth line of first stanza is from an old Ballad.

Emma is looking weller and handsomer (as you say) than ever. Really, if she goes on thus improving, by the time she is nine and thirty she will be a tolerable comely person. But I may not live to see it—I take beauty to be catching—A Cholera sort of thing—Now, whether the constant presence of a handsome Object—for there's only two of us—may not have the effect—but the subject is delicate, and as my old great Aunt used to say, "Andsome is as andsome duzz"—that was my great Aunt's way of spelling. Most and best kind wishes say to yourself and dear Mother, for all your kindnesses to our Em. tho' in truth I am a little tired with her everlasting repetition of 'em.

Yours very truly,

C. LAMB.

DXXXVI. TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

April 14th, 1832.

My dear Coleridge,—Not an unkind thought has passed in my brain about you; but I have been wofully neglectful of you; so that I do not deserve to announce to you, that if I do not hear from you before then, I will set out on Wednesday morning to take you by the hand. I would do it this moment, but an unexpected visit might flurry you. I shall take silence for acquiescence, and come. I am glad you could write so long a letter. Old loves to, and hope of kind looks from, the Gilmans when I come.

Yours, *semper idem*, C. L.

If you ever thought an offence, much more wrote it, against me, it must have been in the times of Noah, and the great waters swept it away. Mary's most kind love, and maybe a wrong prophet of your

bodings!—here she is crying for mere love over your letter. I wring out less, but not sincerer showers.

My direction is simply, Enfield.

DXXXVII. TO EDWARD MOXON

[1832.]

Thank you for the books. I am ashamed to take tithe thus of your press. I am worse to a publisher than the two Universities and the British Museum. A. C. I will forthwith read. B. C. (I can't get out of the A, B, C) I have more than read. Taken altogether, 'tis too lovely; but what delicacies! I like most "King Death"; glorious 'bove all, "The Lady with the Hundred Rings"; "The Owl"; "Epistle to What's his Name" (here may be I'm partial); "Sit down, Sad Soul"; "The Pauper's Jubilee" (but that's old, and yet 'tis never old); "The Falcon"; "Felon's Wife"; damn "Madame Pasty" (but that is borrowed);

> Apple-pie is very good,
> And so is apple-pasty;
> But——
> O Lord! 'tis very nasty:

but chiefly the dramatic fragments,—scarce three of which should have escaped my specimens, had an antique name been prefixed. They exceed his first. So much for the nonsense of poetry; now to the serious business of life. Up a court (Blandford Court) in Pall Mall (exactly at the back of Marlborough House), with iron gate in front, and containing two houses, at No. 2, did lately live Leishman, my tailor. He is moved somewhere in the neighbourhood; devil knows where. Pray find him out, and give him the opposite. I am so much better, though my head shakes in writing it, that, after next Sunday, I can

well see F. and you. Can you throw B. C. in? Why tarry the wheels of my "Hogarth"?

CHARLES LAMB.

DXXXVIII. TO JOHN FORSTER

Friday, 1832.

There was a talk of Richmond on Sunday; but we are hampered with an unavoidable engagement that day; besides that, I wish to show it you when it's woods are in full leaf. Can you have a quiet evening here to-night, or to-morrow night?

We are certainly at home.

Yours, C. LAMB.

DXXXIX. TO EDWARD MOXON

June 1, 1832.

I am a little more than half alive. I was more than half dead. The ladies are very agreeable. I flatter myself I am less than disagreeable. Convey this to Mr Forster. Whom with you I shall just be able to see some ten days hence, and believe me,

Ever yours, C. L.

I take Forster's name to be John; but you know whom I mean, the Pym-praiser, not pimp-raiser.

Mr Moxon,
64, *New Bond Street.*

DXL. TO THE SAME

[Postmarked] July 12, 1832.

Dear M.,—My hand shakes so, I can hardly say don't come yet. I have been worse to-day than you saw me. I am going to try water gruel and quiet if I can get it. But a visitor hast [*sic*] just been down,

and another a day or two before, and I feel half frantic. I will write when better. Make excuses to Forster for the present.

C. LAMB.

Mr Moxon,
64, *New Bond Street.*

DXLI. TO JOHN FORSTER

(With Acrostics enclosed)

To M. L. [MARY LOCKE]

Must I write with pen unwilling,
And describe those graces killing,
Rightly, which I never saw?
Yes—it is the album's law.

Let me then invention strain,
On your excellence grace to feign,
Cold is fiction. I believe it
Kindly as I did receive it;
Even as I, F.'s tongue did weave it.

To S. L. [SARAH LOCKE]

Shall I praise a face unseen,
And extol a fancied mien,
Rave on visionary charm,
And from shadows take alarm!
Hatred hates without a cause.

Love may love without applause,
Or, without a reason given,
Charmed be with unknown heaven.
Keep the secret, though, unmocked.
Ever in your bosom Locked.

Am I *right*? *Sarah* I distinctly remember; but *Mary* I am not sure ought not to be *Anne*. It is soon rectified in that case. *You*, I take to be John.

C. L.

DXLII. TO EDWARD MOXON

December, 1832.

This is my notion. Wait till you are able to throw away a round sum (say £1500) upon a speculation, and then don't do it. For all your loving encouragements—till this final damp came in the shape of your letter—thanks; and for books also. Greet the Forsters and Procters—and come singly or conjunctively as soon as you can. Johnson and Fare's sheets have been wash'd—unless you prefer Danby's *last* bed at the Horsehoe.

To Mr Moxon.

DXLIII. SCRAP OF LETTER TO EDWARD MOXON

I am very sorry the poor Reflector is abortive. 'Twas a child of good promise for its weeks. But if the chances are so much against it, withdraw immediately. It is idle uphill waste of money to spend another stamp upon it.

[*The letter is sealed with black seal around which are the words*

Obiit Edwardus Reflector Armiger, 31 dec. 1832. Natus tres hebdomidas. Pax animæ ejus.]

DXLIV. TO DR ASBURY

No date.

Dear Sir,—It is an observation of a wise man, that "Moderation is best in all things." I cannot agree with him "in liquor." There is a smoothness & oiliness in wine that makes it go down by a natural Channel, which I am positive was made for that descending. Else, why does not wine choke us? Could Nature have made that sloping lane, not to

faciliate the down-going? She does nothing in vain. You know that better than I. You know how often she has helped you at a dead lift, and how much better entitled she is to a fee than yourself sometimes, when you carry off the credit. Still, there is something due to manners and customs, and I should apologise to you and Mrs Asbury for being absolutely carried home upon a man's shoulders thro' Silver Street, up Parsons Lane, by the Chapels (which might have taught me better) and then to be deposited like a dead log at Gaffer Westwood's, who, it seems, does not "insure" against intoxication. Not that the mode of conveyance is objectionable. On the contrary, it is more easy than a one horse chaise.

Ariel, in the "Tempest" says:

> On a Bat's back do I fly
> After Sunset merrily.

Now I take it, that Ariel must sometimes have stayed out late of nights. Indeed he pretends that "where the bee sucks, there lurks he"—as much as to say that his suction is as innocent as that little innocent (but damnably stinging when he is provok'd) winged creature. But I take it, Ariel was fond of metheglin of which the Bees are notorious Brewers. But then you will say, what a shocking sight to see a middle-aged-gentleman-and-a-half riding upon a Gentleman's back up Parsons Lane at midnight. Exactly the time for that sort of conveyance when nobody can see him, nobody but Heaven and his own Conscience; now Heaven makes fools, and don't expect much from her own creation; and as for Conscience, she and I have long since come to a compromise. I have given up false modesty, and she allows me to abate a little of the true . . . By the way, is magnesia good on these occasions? ʒiii pol. med. sum. ante noct. in rub. can. I am no licentiate, but know enough of simples to beg you to send me a draught

after this model. But still you'll say (or the men and maids at your house will say) that it is not a seemly sight for an old gentleman to go home a pick-a-back. Well, maybe it is not. But I have never studied grace. I take it to be a mere superficial accomplishment. I regard more the internal acquisitions. The great object after supper is to get home, and whether that is obtained in a horizontal posture, or perpendicular (as foolish men and apes affect for dignity) I think is little to the purpose. The end is always greater than the means. Here I am, able to compose a sensible rational apology, and what signifies how I got here? I have just sense enough to remember I was very happy last night, and to thank our kind host and hostess, and that's Sense enough, I hope. N.B. what is good for a desperate head-ache? why, Patience, and a determination not to mind being miserable all day long. And that I have made my mind up to. . . . Yours Truly,

C. LAMB.

[*Addressed*] J. V. Asbury Esqre.

DXLV. TO MR DILKE

[? 1832.]

May I now claim of you the benefit of the loan of some books? *Do not fear sending too many.* But do not, if it be irksome to yourself, such as shall make you say, "Damn it, here's Lamb's box come again." *Dogs' leaves ensured.* Any light stuff; no natural history, or useful learning, such as Pyramids, Catacombs, Giraffes, Adventures in South Africa, &c.

P.S.—Novels for the last two years, or further back; nonsense of any period.

DXLVI. TO JOHN FORSTER

[January, 1833.]

I wish you'd go to Dilke's or let Mockson, and ax him to add this to what I sent him a few days since,

John Forster,
from an engraving by C. H. Jeens.

and to continue it the week after. The Plantas, &c., are capital. Come down with Procter and Dante on Sunday. I send you the last proof — not of my friendship. I knew you would like the title; I do thoroughly. The last Essays of Elia keeps out any notion of its being a second volume. Come down to-morrow or Saturday, be here by two or half after; coaches from Snow Hill.

C. Lamb.

I don't mean at his house, but the Athenæum Office, send it there. Hand shakes.

John Foster (or Forrester).

DXLVII. TO THE PRINTER OF THE "ATHENÆUM"

[? January, 1833.]

I have read the enclosed five-and-forty times over. I have submitted it to my Edmonton friends. At last (O! Argus penetration!) I have discovered a dash that might be dispensed with. Pray don't trouble yourself with such useless courtesies. I can well trust your editor when I don't use queer phrases which *prove themselves wrong* by creating a distrust in the sober compositor.

DXLVIII. TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

January, 1833.

For Landor's kindness I have just esteem. I shall tip him a letter when you tell me how to address him. Give Emma's kindest regrets that I could not entice her good friend, your Nephew, here. Our warmest love to the Bury Robinsons. Our all three to H. Crab.

H. C. Robinson, Esq.
2, Plowden's Buildings, Middle Temple.

Accompanying copy of Landor's verses to Emma

Isola, and others, contributed to Miss Wordsworth's Album, and poem written at Wast-water. C. L.

DXLIX. TO EDWARD MOXON

Dear M.,—Emma has teized me to take her into the gallery of an opera on Tuesday, and I have written for orders. We came up this morning. Can you house and bed us after the opera? Miss M., maybe, won't object to sharing half her bed. And for *me*, I can sleep on straw, rushes, thorns, Procrustes' couch! or anywhere. Do not write if you *can take* us in. Write only IF YOU can't.

CH. LAMB.

DL. TO THOMAS NOON TALFOURD

Feb. 1833.

My dear T.,—Now cannot I call him *Serjeant*; what is there in a coif? Those canvas sleeves protective from ink, when he was a law-chit—a *Chitty*-ling, (let the leathern apron be apocryphal,) do more 'specially plead to the Jury Court, of old memory. The costume (will he agnize it?) was as of a desk-fellow, or Socius Plutei. Methought I spied a brother!

That familiarity is extinct for ever. Curse me if I can call him Mr Serjeant—except, mark me, in *company*. Honour where honour is due; but should he ever visit us, (do you think he ever will, Mary?) what a distinction should I keep up between him and our less fortunate friend, H. C. R.! Decent respect shall always be the Crabb's—but, somehow, short of reverence.

Well, of my old friends, I have lived to see two knighted, one made a judge, another in a fair way to it. Why am I restive? why stands my sun upon Gibeon?

Variously, my dear Mrs Talfourd, [I can be more familiar with her!] Mrs *Serjeant* Talfourd,—my sister prompts me—(these ladies stand upon ceremonies)—has the congratulable news affected the members of our small community. Mary comprehended it at once, and entered into it heartily. Mrs W—— was, as usual, perverse; wouldn't, or couldn't, understand it. A Serjeant? She thought Mr T. was in the law. Didn't know that he ever 'listed.

Emma alone truly sympathized. *She* had a silk gown come home that very day, and has precedence before her learned sisters accordingly.

We are going to drink the health of Mr and Mrs Serjeant, with all the young serjeantry; and that is all that I can see that I shall get by the promotion.

Valete, et mementote amici quondam vestri humillimi. C. L.

DLI. TO EDWARD MOXON

1833.

My dear M.—I send you the last proof—not of my friendship—pray see to the finish. I think you will see the necessity of adding those words after "Preface"—and "Preface" should be in the Contents-table.

I take for granted you approve the title. I do thoroughly. Perhaps if you advertise it in full as it now stands, the title page might have simply the Last Essays of Elia, to keep out any notion of its being a second vol.

Well, I wish us luck heartily, for your sake who have smarted by me.

DLII. TO THE SAME

February 11, 1833.

I wish you would omit "by the Author of Elia" now, in advertising that damn'd "Devil's Wedding."

I had sneaking hopes you would have dropt in to-day, 'tis my poor birthday. Don't stay away so. Give Forster a hint. You are to bring your brother some day—*sisters* in better weather. Pray give me one line to say if you receiv'd and forwarded Emma's pacquet to Miss Adams — and how Dover Street looks. Adieu. Is there no Blackwood this month? What separation will there be between the Friend's preface and THE ESSAYS? Should not "Last Essays, &c., &c.," head them? If 'tis too late, don't mind. I don't care a farthing about it.

Mr Moxon.

DLIII. TO WILLIAM HONE

[March 6, 1833.]

Dear Friend,—Thee hast sent a Christian epistle to me, and I should not feel dear if I neglected to reply to it, which would have been sooner if that vain young man, to whom thou didst intrust it, had not kept it back. We should rejoice to see thy outward man here, especially on a day which should not be a first day, being liable to worldly callers in on that day. Our little book is delayed by a heathenish injunction, threatened by the man Taylor. Canst thou copy and send, or bring with thee, a vanity in verse which in my younger days I wrote on friend Ader's pictures? Thou wilt find it in the book called the *Table Book*.

Tryphena and Tryphosa, whom the world calleth Mary and Emma, greet you with me.

CH. LAMB.

6th of 3rd month, 4th day.

W. Hone, Esq.,
Grasshopper Hotel,
Gracechurch Street.

DLIV. TO EDWARD MOXON

March 19, 1833.

I shall expect Forster and two Moxons on Sunday, and hope for Procter. I am obliged to be in town next Monday. Could we contrive to make a party (paying or not is immaterial) for Miss Kelly's that night; and can you shelter us after the play—I mean Emma and me. I fear I cannot persuade Mary to join us.

N.B.—*I can sleep at a public house.* Send an Elia (mind I *insist* on you buying it,) to T. Manning, Esq., at Sir G. Tuthill's, Cavendish Square. Do write.

E. Moxon.

DLV. TO JOHN FORSTER

1833.

Swallow your damn'd dinner, and your brandy and water fast, and come immediately. I want to take Knowles in to Emma's only female friend for five minutes only. We are free for the evening. I'll do a Prologue.

Messrs Knowles & Forster.

DLVI. TO EDWARD MOXON

[April 1833.]

Last line alter to—

A *store* of gratitude is left behind.

Because, as it now stands, if the Author lays his hand upon his heart, and emfattically says—

I have (so and so) *behind*,

the audience may think it is all my . . . . in a band-box, and so in fact it is.

Yours, by old and new ties

Turn over C. LAMB.

Condemn them, damn them, hiss them as you will
Their Author is your grateful Servant still.

I want to see FOUSTER (not the German foust) and you, boy.

Mind, I don't care the 100,000th part of a bad sixpence if Knowles gets a Prologue more to his mind.

E. Moxon, Esq.

DLVII. TO MARIANNE AYRTON

[Dated, probably by recipient, and postmarked April 16, 1833.]

Dear Mrs Ayrton,

I do not know which to admire most, your kindness, or your patience, in copying out that intolerable rabble of panegyric from over the Atlantic. By the way, now your hand is in, I wish you would copy out for me the 13th, 17th, and 24th of Barrow's sermons in folio, and all of Tillotson's (folio also) except the first, which I have in Manuscript, and which, you know, is Ayrton's favorite. Then—but I won't trouble you any further just now. Why does not A. come and see me? Can't he and Henry Crabbe concert it? 'Tis as easy as lying is to me.

Mary's kindest love to you both. ELIA.

Mrs Ayrton,
James Street,
Westminster.

DLVIII. TO EDWARD MOXON

[April 27, 1833.]

Dear M.,—Mary and I are very poorly. We have had a sick child, who, sleeping or not sleeping, next

me, with a pasteboard partition between, killed my sleep. The little bastard is gone. My bedfellows are cough and cramp; we sleep three in a bed. Domestic arrangements (baker, butcher, and all) devolve on Mary. Don't come yet to this house of pest and age! We propose, when you and E. agree on the time, to come up and meet you at the B———'s, say a week hence, but do you make the appointment.

Mind, our spirits are good, and we are happy in your happinesses. C. L.

Our old and ever loves to dear Emma.

DLIX. TO JOHN FORSTER

April 24, 1833.

I have placed poor Mary at Edmonton. I shall be very glad to see the Hunch Back and Straitback the first evening they can come. I am very poorly indeed; I have been cruelly thrown out. Come, and don't let me drink too much. I drank more yesterday than I ever did any one day in my life.

Do come. C. L.

Cannot your sister come, and take a half-bed or a whole one, which, alas, we have to spare.

CHAPTER III

THE ASYLUM AT EDMONTON: AND THE GRAVEYARD THERE

MAY 1833—DECEMBER 1834

DLX. TO JOHN FORSTER

May 13th, 1833.

Dear Boy,—I send you the original Elias, complete. When I am a little composed, I shall hope to see you and Procter here; may be, may see you first in London. C. L.

J. Forster, Esq.,
From C. L. Mr Walden's,
Church Street, Edmonton.

DLXI. TO MISS BETHAM

Dear Miss Betham,—I sit down, very poorly, to write to you, being come to *Mr Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton,* to be altogether with poor Mary, who is very ill, as usual, only that her illnesses are now as many months as they used to be weeks in duration—the reason your letter only just found me. I am saddened with the havoc death has made in your family. I do not know how to appreciate the kind regard of dear Anne; Mary will understand it two months hence, I hope; but neither she nor I would rob you, if the legacy will be of use to, or comfort to you. My hand shakes so that I can hardly write. On Saturday week I must come to town, and will call on you in the morning before one o'clock. Till when I take kindest leave.

Your old friend, C. LAMB.

William Wordsworth,
from the picture by B. R. Haydon.

DLXII. TO MRS HAZLITT

May 31st, 1833.

Dear Mrs Hazlitt,—I will assuredly come and find you out when I am better. I am driven from house to house by Mary's illness. I took a sudden resolution to take my sister to Edmonton, where she was under medical treatment last time, and have arranged to board and lodge with the people. Thank God, I have repudiated Enfield. I have got out of hell, despair of heaven, and must sit down contented in a half-way purgatory. Thus ends this strange eventful history. But I am nearer town, and will get up to you somehow before long.

I repent not of my resolution. 'Tis late, and my hand is unsteady; so good bye till we meet,

Your old C. L.

Mr Walden's,
Church Street, Edmonton.

Mrs Hazlitt, No. 4, Palace Street, Pimlico.

DLXIII. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

End of May nearly [1833].

Dear Wordsworth,—Your letter, save in what respects your dear sister's health, cheered me in my new solitude. Mary is ill again. Her illnesses encroach yearly. The last was three months, followed by two of depression most dreadful. I look back upon her earlier attacks with longing: nice little durations of six weeks or so, followed by complete restoration,—shocking as they were to me then. In short, half her life she is dead to me, and the other half is made anxious with fears and lookings forward to the next shock. With such prospects, it seemed to me necessary that she should no longer live with me, and be fluttered with continual removals; so I am come to live with her, at a Mr Walden's, and his

wife, who take in patients, and have arranged to lodge and board us only. They have had the care of her before. I see little of her: alas! I too often hear her. *Sunt lachrymæ rerum!* and you and I must bear it.

To lay a little more load on it, a circumstance has happened, *cujus pars magna fui*, and which, at another crisis, I should have more rejoiced in. I am about to lose my old and only walk-companion, whose mirthful

spirits were the "youth of our house," Emma Isola. I have her here now for a little while, but she is too nervous, properly to be under such a roof, so she will make short visits,—be no more an inmate. With my perfect approval, and more than concurrence, she is to be wedded to Moxon, at the end of August—so "perish the roses and the flowers"—how is it?

Now to the brighter side. I am emancipated from the Westwoods, and I am with attentive people, and younger. I am three or four miles nearer the great city; coaches half-price less, and going always, of which I will avail myself. I have few friends left there, one or two though, most beloved. But London streets and faces cheer me inexpressibly, though not one known of the latter were remaining.

Thank you for your cordial reception of "Elia." Inter nos, the "Ariadne" is not a darling with me; several incongruous things are in it, but in the composition it served me as illustrative.

I want you in the "Popular Fallacies" to like the *Home that is no home*, and *Rising with the lark*.

I am feeble, but cheerful in this my genial hot weather. Walked sixteen miles yesterday. I can't read much in summer time.

With my kindest love to all, and prayers for dear Dorothy,

I remain most affectionately yours,

C. LAMB.

At Mr Walden's, Church Street,
Edmonton, Middlesex.

Moxon has introduced Emma to Rogers, and he smiles upon the project. I have given E. my MILTON, (will you pardon me?) in part of a *portion*. It hangs famously in his Murray-like shop.

DLXIV. TO JOHN FORSTER

[? Summer, 1833.]

Dear F.,—Can you oblige me by sending four Box orders undated, for the Olympic Theatre? I suppose Knowles can get 'em. It is for the Waldens, with whom I live. The sooner the better, that they may not miss the "Wife." I meet you at the Talfourds Saturday week; and if they can't, perhaps you can give me a bed.

Yours, ratherish unwell,

C. LAMB.

Dr Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton.

Or write immediately to say if you can't get 'em.

DLXV. TO MISS MARY BETHAM

[June 5, 1833.]

Dear Mary Betham, — I remember you all, and tears come out when I think on the years that have separated us. That dear Anne should so long have remember'd us affects me. My dear Mary, my poor sister is not, nor will be for two months perhaps, capable of appreciating the *kind old long memory* of dear Anne.

But not a penny will I take, and I can answer for my Mary when she recovers, if the sum left can contribute in any way to the comfort of Matilda.

We will halve it, or we will take a bit of it, as a token, rather than wrong her. So pray consider it as an amicable arrangement. I write in great haste, or you won't get it before you go.

We do not want the money; but if dear Matilda does not much want it, why, we will take our thirds. God bless you.

C. LAMB.

I am not at Enfield, but at Mr Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton, Middlesex.

DLXVI. TO EDWARD MOXON

Dear M.,—A thousand thanks for your punctualities. What a cheap Book is the last Hogarth you sent me! I am pleased now that Hunt *diddled* me out of the old one. Speaking of this, only think of the new farmer with his thirty acres. There is a portion of land in Lambeth Parish, called Knave's Acre. I wonder he overlook'd it. Don't show this to the firm of Dilk and Co. I next want one copy of Leicester's School, and wish you to pay Leishman, Taylor, 2, Blandford Place, Pall Mall, opposite the British Institution, £6 10s., for coat and waistcoat, &c., &c., and I vehemently thirst for the fourth No. of Nichols's Hogarth, to bind 'em up (the two books) as Hogarth and Supplement. But as you know the price, don't stay for its appearance; but come as soon as ever you can with your bill of all demands in full, and as I have none but £5 notes, bring with you sufficient change. Weather is beautiful. I grieve sadly for Miss Wordsworth. We are all well again. Emma is with us, and we all shall be glad of a sight of you. Come on Sunday, if you *can*, better if you come before.

Perhaps Rogers would smile at this. A pest, half chemist, half apothecary in our town who smatters of literature, and is immeasurably unlettered, said to me, "Pray, sir, may not Hood (he of the acres) be reckon'd the Prince of Wits in the present day?" To which I assenting, he adds "I had always thought that Rogers had been reckon'd the Prince of Wits, but I suppose that now Mr Hood has the better title to that appellation." To which I replied, that Mr R. had wit with much better qualities, but did not aspire to the principality. He had taken all the puns manufactured in John Bull for our friend, in sad and stupid earnest. One more Album Verses, please. Adieu. C. L.

DLXVII. TO THE SAME

July 24th, 1833.

For God's sake give Emma no more watches; *one* has turned her head. She is arrogant and insulting. She said something very unpleasant to our old clock in the passage, as if he did not keep time, and yet he had made her no appointment. She takes it out every instant to look at the moment-hand. She lugs us out into the fields, because there the bird-boys ask you, "Pray, Sir, can you tell us what's o'clock?" and she answers them punctually. She loses all her time looking to see "what the time is." I overheard her whispering, "Just so many hours, minutes, &c., to Tuesday; I think St George's goes too slow." This little present of Time!—why,—'tis Eternity to her!

What can make her so fond of a gingerbread watch?

She has spoiled some of the movements. Between ourselves, she has kissed away "half-past twelve." which I suppose to be the canonical hour in Hanover Square.

Well, if "love me love my watch" answers, she will keep time to you.

It goes right by the Horse Guards.

Dearest M.,—Never mind opposite nonsense. She does not love you for the watch, but the watch for you. I will be at the wedding, and keep the 30th July, as long as my poor months last me, as a festival, gloriously.

Yours ever,

ELIA.

We have not heard from Cambridge. I will write the moment we do.

Edmonton, 24th July, twenty minutes past three by Emma's watch.

DLXVIII. TO THOMAS ALLSOP

July, 1833.

My Dear Allsop,—I think it will be impossible for us to come to Highgate in the time you propose. We have friends coming to-morrow, who may stay the week; and we are in a bustle about Emma's leaving us—so we will put off the hope of seeing Mrs Allsop till we come to Town, after Emma's going, which is in a fortnight and a half, when we mean to spend a time in Town, but shall be happy to see you on Sunday, or any day.

In haste. Hope our little Porter does.

Yours ever, C. L.

DLXIX. TO EDWARD MOXON

1833.

Dear M.,—Many thanks for the books; but most thanks for one immortal sentence: "If I do not *cheat* him, never *trust* me again." I do not know whether to admire most, the wit or justness of the sentiment. It has my cordial approbation. My sense of *meum* and *tuum* applauds it. I maintain it, the eighth commandment hath a secret special reservation, by which the reptile is exempt from any protection from it. As a dog, or a nigger, he is not a holder of property. Not a ninth of what he detains from the world is his own. "Keep your hands from picking and stealing," is no ways referable to his acquists. I doubt whether bearing false witness against thy neighbour at all contemplated this possible scrub. Could Moses have seen the speck in vision? An *ex post facto* law alone could relieve him; and we are taught to expect no eleventh commandment. The outlaw to the Mosaic dispensation!—unworthy to have seen Moses behind!—to lay his desecrating hands upon Elia! Has the irreverent ark-toucher been struck blind, I wonder? The more I think of him, the less I think of him,

His meanness is invisible with aid of solar microscope. My moral eye smarts at him. The less flea that bites little fleas! The great BEAST! The beggarly NIT!

More when we meet; mind, you'll come, two of you; and couldn't you go off in the morning, that we may have a day-long curse at him, if curses are not dis-hallowed by descending so low! Amen. Maledicatur in extremis! C. L.

DLXX. TO MR TUFF

[Edmonton, 1833.]

Dear Sir,—I learn that Covent Garden, from its thin houses every night, is likely to be shut up after Saturday; so that no time is to be lost in using the orders. Yours,

C. LAMB.

DLXXI. TO MR AND MRS MOXON

August, 1833.

Dear Mr and Mrs Moxon,—Time very short. I wrote to Miss Fryer, and had the sweetest letter about you, Emma, that ever friendship dictated. "I am full of good wishes, I am crying with good wishes," she says; but you shall see it.

Dear Moxon,—I take your writing most kindly, and shall most kindly your writing from Paris.

I want to crowd another letter to Miss Fryer into the little time after dinner, before post time. So with twenty thousand congratulations,

Yours,

C. L.

I am calm, sober, happy. Turn over for the reason. I got home from Dover Street, by Evans, *half as sober as a judge*. I am turning over a new leaf, as I hope you will now.

[*The turn of the leaf presented the following* :—]

My dear Emma and Edward Moxon,—Accept my sincere congratulations, and imagine more good wishes than my weak nerves will let me put into good set words. The dreary blank of *unanswered questions* which I ventured to ask in vain was cleared up on the wedding day by Mrs W. taking a glass of wine, and, with a total change of countenance, begging leave to drink Mr and Mrs Moxon's health. It restored me from that moment, as if by an electrical stroke, to the entire possession of my senses. I never felt so calm and quiet after a similar illness as I do now. I feel as if all tears were wiped from my eyes, and all care from my heart.

MARY LAMB.

Wednesday.

Dears again,—Your letter interrupted a seventh game at picquet which *we* were having, after walking to Wright's and purchasing shoes. We pass our time in cards, walks, and reading. We attack Tasso soon. C. L.

Never was such a calm, or such a recovery. 'Tis her own words undictated.

DLXXII. TO REV. HENRY F. CARY

Sept. 9th, 1833.

Dear Sir,—Your packet I have only just received, owing, I suppose, to the absence of Moxon, who is flaunting it about *à la Parisienne*, with his new bride, our Emma, much to his satisfaction, and not a little to our dulness. We shall be quite well by the time you return from Worcestershire, and most, most (observe the repetition) glad to see you here, or anywhere.

I will take my time with Darley's act. I wish poets would write a little plainer; he begins some of his words with a letter which is unknown to the English typography.

Yours, most truly,

C. LAMB.

P.S.—Pray let me know when you return. We are at Mr Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton; no longer at Enfield. You will be amused to hear that my sister and I have, with the aid of Emma, scrambled through the "Inferno," by the blessed furtherance of your polar-star translation. I think we scarce left any thing unmadeout. But our partner has left us, and we have not yet resumed. Mary's chief pride in it was that she should some day brag of it to you. Your "Dante" and Sandys' "Ovid" are the only helpmates of translations. Neither of you shirk a word.

Fairfax's "Tasso" is no translation at all. 'Tis better in some places, but it merely observes the number of stanzas; as for images, similes, &c., he finds 'em himself, and never troubles Peter for the matter.

In haste, dear Cary, yours ever,

C. LAMB.

Has M. sent you "Elia," second volume? If not he shall. Taylor and we are at law about it.

DLXXIII. TO EDWARD MOXON

Nov. 29th, 1833.

Mary is of opinion with me, that two of these sonnets are of a higher grade than any poetry you have done yet. The one to Emma is so pretty! I have only allowed myself to transpose a word in the third line. Sacred shall it be for any intermeddling of mine. But we jointly beg that you

will make four lines in the room of the four last. Read "Darby and Joan," in Mrs Moxon's first album. There you'll see how beautiful in age the looking back to youthful years in an old couple is. But it is a violence to the feelings to anticipate that time in youth. I hope you and Emma will have many a quarrel and many a make-up (and she is beautiful in reconciliation!) before the dark days shall come, in which ye shall say "there is small comfort in them." You have begun a sort of character of Emma in them, very sweetly: carry it on, if you can, through the last lines.

I love the sonnet to my heart, and you *shall* finish it, and I'll be damn'd if I furnish a line towards it. So much for that. The next best is to the Ocean.

> "Ye gallant winds, if e'er your LUSTY CHEEKS
> Blew longing lover to his mistress' side,
> O, puff your loudest, spread the canvas wide,"

is spirited. The last line I altered, and have re-altered it as it stood. It is closer. These two are your best. But take a good deal of time in finishing the first. How proud should Emma be of her poets!

Perhaps "O Ocean" (though I like it) is too much of the open vowels which Pope objects to. "Great Ocean!" is obvious. To save sad thoughts I think is better (though not good) than for the mind to save herself. But 'tis a noble sonnet. "St Cloud" I have no fault to find with.

If I return the sonnets, think it no disrespect, for I look for a printed copy. You have done better than ever. And now for a reason I did not notice 'em earlier. On Wednesday they came, and on Wednesday I was a-gadding. Mary gave me a holiday, and I set off to Snow Hill. From Snow Hill I deliberately was marching down, with noble Holborn before me, framing in mental cogitation a map of the dear

London in prospect, thinking to traverse Wardour Street, &c., when diabolically I was interrupted by

Heigh-ho!
Little Barrow!—

Emma knows him—and [was] prevailed [by] on him to spend the day (infinite loss!) at his sister's, a pawnbroker's in Gray's Inn Lane, where was an album, and (O march of intellect!) plenty of literary conversation, and more acquaintance with the state of modern poetry than I could keep up with. I was positively distanced. Knowles's play, which, epilogued by me, lay on the piano, alone made me hold up my head. When I came home I read your letter, and glimpsed at your beautiful sonnet,

"Fair art thou as the morning, my young bride,"

and dwelt upon it in a confused brain, but determined not to open them all next day, being in a state not to be told of at Chatteris. Tell it not in Gath, Emma, lest the daughters triumph! I am at the end of my tether. I wish you would come on Tuesday with your fair bride. Why can't you! Do. We are thankful to your sister for being of the party. Come, and *bring* a sonnet on Mary's birthday. Love to the whole Moxonry, and tell E. I every day love her more, and miss her less. Tell her so, from her loving uncle, as she has let me call myself. I bought a fine embossed card yesterday, and wrote for the Pawnbrokeress's album. She is a Miss Brown, engaged to a Mr White. One of the lines was (I forget the rest; but she had them at twenty-four hours' notice; she is going out to India with her husband)—

"May your fame,
And fortune, Frances, WHITEN with your name!"

Not bad as a pun. I *will* expect you before two on Tuesday. I am well and happy, tell E.

DLXXIV. TO SAMUEL ROGERS

Dec. 1833.

My dear Sir,—Your book, by the unremitting punctuality of your publisher, has reached me thus early. I have not opened it, nor will till to-morrow, when I promise myself a thorough reading of it. The "Pleasures of Memory" was the first school present I made to Mrs Moxon; it has those nice wood-cuts, and I believe she keeps it still. Believe me, that all the kindness you have shown to the husband of that excellent person seems done unto myself. I have tried my hand at a sonnet in the *Times*; but the turn I gave it, though I hoped it would not displease you, I thought might not be equally agreeable to your artist. I met that dear old man at poor Henry's, with you, and again at Cary's, and it was sublime to see him sit, deaf, and enjoy all that was going on in mirth with the company. He reposed upon the many graceful, many fantastic images he had created; with them he dined, and took wine. I have ventured at an antagonist copy of verses, in the *Athenæum*, to *him*, in which he is as every thing, and you as nothing. He is no lawyer who cannot take two sides. But I am jealous of the combination of the sister arts. Let them sparkle apart. What injury (short of the theatres) did not Boydell's Shakspeare Gallery do me with Shakspeare? to have Opie's Shakspeare, Northcote's Shakspeare, light-headed Fuseli's Shakspeare, heavy-headed Romney's Shakspeare, wooden-headed West's Shakspeare, (though he did the best in Lear,) deaf-headed Reynolds's Shakspeare, instead of my and every body's Shakspeare; to be tied down to an authentic face of Juliet! to have Imogen's portrait! to confine the illimitable! I like you and Stothard, (you best,) but "out upon this half-faced fellowship!" Sir, when I have read the book, I may trouble you, through Moxon, with

some faint criticisms. It is not the flatteringest compliment, in a letter to an author, to say you have not read his book yet. But the devil of a reader he must be who prances through it in five minutes; and no longer have I received the parcel. It was a little tantalizing to me to receive a letter from Landor, *Gebir* Landor, from Florence, to say he was just sitting down to read my "Elia," just received; but the letter was to go out before the reading. There are calamities in authorship which only authors know. I am going to call on Moxon on Monday, if the throng of carriages in Dover Street, on the morn of publication, do not barricade me out.

With many thanks, and most respectful remembrances to your sister,

Yours, C. Lamb.

Have you seen Coleridge's happy exemplification in English of the Ovidian Elegiac metre?

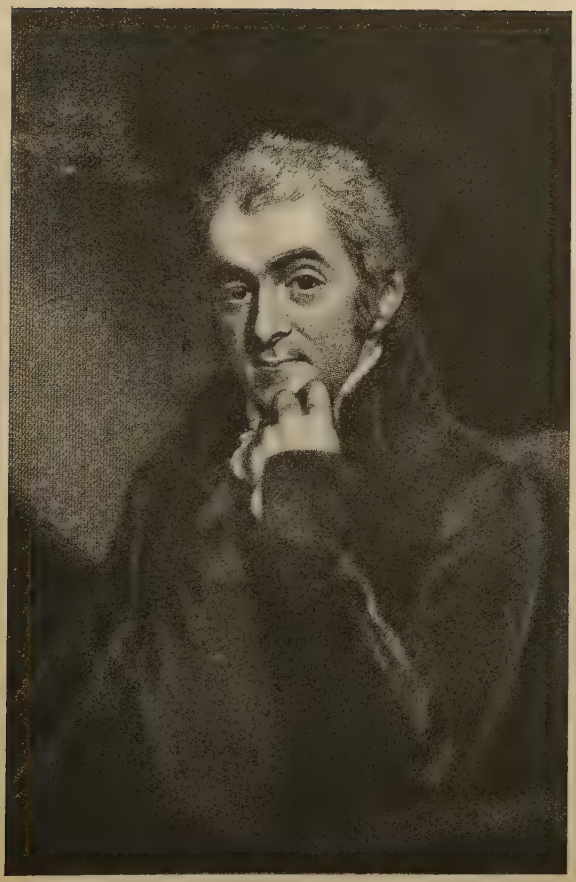
> In the Hexameter rises the fountain's silvery current,
> In the Pentameter aye falling in melody down.

My sister is papering up the book,—careful soul!

DLXXV. TO MARY BETHAM

[Postmark Edmonton. January 24, 1834,]
24 Jany—Church Street, Edmonton.

Dear Mary Betham, — I received the Bill, and when it is payable, some ten or 12 days hence, will punctually do with the overplus as you direct: I thought you would like to know it came to hand, so I have not waited for the uncertainty of when your nephew sets out. I suppose my receit will serve, for poor Mary is not in a capacity to sign it. After being well from the end of July to the end of December she was taken ill almost on the first day of



Samuel Rogers, from an engraving by Henry Meyer, after the painting by John Hoppner, R.A.

the New Year, and is as bad as poor creature can be. I expect her fever to last 14 or 15 weeks—if she gets well at all which every successive illness puts me in fear of—She has less and less strength to throw it off, and they leave a dreadful depression after them. She was quite comfortable a few weeks since, when Matilda came down here to see us.

You shall excuse a short letter, for my hand is unsteady. Indeed, the situation I am in with her, shakes me sadly. She was quite able to appreciate the kind Legacy, while she was well.

Imagine her kindest love to you, which is but buried awhile, and believe all the good wishes for your restoration to health from

C. LAMB.

Miss Mary Betham
to the care of Sir Wm. Betham
Record Tower, Dublin.

DLXXVI. TO EDWARD MOXON

Edmonton, January 28, 1834.

I met with a man at my half-way house, who told me many anecdotes of Kean's younger life. He knew him thoroughly. His name is Wyatt, living near the Bell, Edmonton. Also he referred me to West, a publican opposite St George's Church, Southwark, who knew him *more* intimately. Is it worth Forster's while to inquire after them?

E. Moxon, Esq.,

DLXXVII. TO WILLIAM HONE

Church Street, Edmonton,
7th Feb. 1834.

My dear Sir,—I compassionate very much your failure and your infirmities. I am in affliction. I am come to Edmonton to live altogether with Mary, at the house where she is nursed, and where we see

nobody while she is ill, which is alas! the greater part of the year now. I cannot but think your application, with a full statement, to the Literary Fund must succeed. Your little political heats many years are past. You are now remember'd but as the Editor of the Every Day & Table Books. To *them* appeal. You have Southey's testimony to their meritoriousness. He must be blind indeed who sees ought in them but what is good hearted, void of offence to God and Man. I know not a single Member of the Fund, but to whomsoever you may refer to me I am ready to affirm that your speech and actions since I have known you—ten or eleven years I think—have been the most opposite to any thing profane or irreligious, and that in your domestic relations a kinder husband or father, as it seemed to me, could not be. Suppose you transmitted your case, or petition, to Mr Dilke, Editor of the Athenæum, with this note of mine—he knows me—and he may know some of the Literary Society. I am totally unacquainted with them.

With best wishes to you & Mrs Hone,
Yours faithfully
C. Lamb.

To Mr Wm. Hone,
Peckham Rye Common.

DLXXVIII. TO MISS FRYER

Feb. 14, 1834.

Dear Miss Fryer,—Your letter found me just returned from keeping my birthday (pretty innocent!) at Dover Street. I see them pretty often. I have since had letters of business to write, or should have replied earlier. In one word, be less uneasy about me; I bear my privations very well; I am not in the depths of desolation, as heretofore. Your admonitions are not lost upon me. Your kindness has sunk

into my heart. Have faith in me! It is no new thing for me to be left to my sister. When she is not violent, her rambling chat is better to me than the sense and sanity of this world. Her heart is obscured, not buried; it breaks out occasionally; and one can discern a strong mind struggling with the billows that have gone over it. I could be nowhere happier than under the same roof with her. Her memory is unnaturally strong; and from ages past, if we may so call the earliest records of our poor life, she fetches thousands of names and things that never would have dawned upon me again, and thousands from the ten years she lived before me. What took place from early girlhood to her coming of age, principally lives again (every important thing, and every trifle) in her brain, with the vividness of real presence. For twelve hours incessantly she will pour out without intermission all her past life, forgetting nothing, pouring out name after name to the Waldens, as a dream; sense and nonsense; truths and errors huddled together; a medley between inspiration and possession. What things we are! I know you will bear with me, talking of these things. It seems to ease me, for I have nobody to tell these things to now. Emma, I see, has got a harp! and is learning to play. She has framed her three Walton pictures, and pretty they look. That is a book you should read; such sweet religion in it, next to Woolman's, though the subject be baits, and hooks, and worms, and fishes. She has my copy at present, to do two more from.

Very, very tired! I began this epistle, having been epistolizing all the morning, and very kindly would I end it, could I find adequate expressions to your kindness. We did set our minds on seeing you in Spring. One of us will indubitably. But I am not skilled in almanack learning to know when Spring precisely begins and ends. Pardon my blots; I am glad you like your book. I wish it had been half as

worthy of your acceptance as John Woolman. But tis a good-natured book.

DLXXIX. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Church Street, Edmonton,
February 22, 1834.

Dear Wordsworth,—I write from a house of mourning. The oldest and best friends I have left are in trouble. A branch of them (and they of the best stock of God's creatures, I believe,) is establishing a school at Carlisle; Her name is Louisa Martin; her address, 75, Castle Street, Carlisle; her qualities (and her motives for this exertion) are the most amiable, most upright. For thirty years she has been tried by me, and on her behaviour I would stake my soul. O, if you can recommend her, how would I love you—if I could love you better! Pray, pray, recommend her. She is as good a human creature,—next to my sister, perhaps, the most exemplary female I ever knew. Moxon tells me you would like a letter from me; you shall have one. *This* I cannot mingle up with any nonsense which you usually tolerate from C. Lamb. Need he add loves to wife, sister, and all? Poor Mary is ill again, after a short lucid interval of four or five months. In short, I may call her half dead to me. Good you are to me. Yours with fervour of friendship, for ever. C. L.

If you want references, the Bishop of Carlisle may be one. Louisa's sister (as good as she, she cannot be better, though she tries,) educated the daughers of the late Earl of Carnarvon, and he settled a handsome annuity on her for life. In short, all the family are a sound rock.

DLXXX. TO WALTER WILSON

May 17, 1834.

Dear Walter,

The sight of your old name again was like a resurrection. It had passed away into the dimness of a dead friend. We shall be most joyful to see you here next week,—if I understand you right—for your note dated the 10th arrived only yesterday, Friday the 16th, suppose I name *Thursday* next. If that don't suit, write to say so. A morning coach comes from the Bell or Bell and Crown by Leather Lane, Holburn, and sets you down at our house on the Chase Side, next door to Mr *Westwood's*, whom all the coachmen know—

I have four more notes to write, so dispatch this with again assuring you how happy we shall be to see you, and to discuss Defoe and old matters.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Enfield, Saturday, 17th May.

DLXXXI. TO JOHN FORSTER

(June 25, 1834 *on Post mark.*)

Dr F.

I simply sent for the Miltons because Alsop has some Books of mine, and I thought they might travel with them. But keep 'em as much longer as you like.—I never trouble my head with other peoples quarrels. I do not always understand my own. I seldom see them in Dover Street. I know as little as the Man in the Moon about your joint transactions, & care as little. If you have lost a little portion of my "good will," it is that you do not come to see me—Arrange with Procter when you have done with your moving accidents.

Yours, Ambulaturus,

C. L.

DLXXXII. TO THE REV. JAMES GILLMAN

August 5, 1834.

My dear Sir,—The sad week being over, I must write to you to say that I was glad of being spared from attending; I have no words to express my feeling with you all. I can only say that when you think a short visit from me would be acceptable, when your father and mother shall be able to see me *with comfort*, I will come to the bereaved house. Express to them my tenderest regards and hopes that they will continue our friends still. We both love and respect them as much as human being can, and finally thank them with our hearts for what they have been to the poor departed.

God bless you all,

C. LAMB.

Mr Walden's,
Church Street, Edmonton.

DLXXXIII. TO REV. HENRY F. CARY

Sept. 12, 1834.

"By Cot's plessing we will not be absence at the grace."

Dear C.—We long to see you, and hear account of your peregrinations, of the Tun at Heidelburg, the Clock at Strasburg, the statue at Rotterdam, the dainty Rhenish, and poignant Mosselle wines, Westphalian hams, and Botargoes of Altona. But perhaps you have seen, not tasted any of these things.

Yours, very glad to chain you back again to your proper centre, books and Bibliothecæ,

C. and M. LAMB

I have only got your note just now *ber negligentiam periniqui Moxoni.*

DLXXXIV. TO MR CHILDS

[Sept. 15, 1834.]
Monday. Church Street, Edmonton,
(not Enfield, as you erroneously
direct yours).

Dear Sir,—The volume which you seem to want is not to be had for love or money. I with difficulty procured a copy for myself. Yours is gone to enlighten the tawny Hindoos. What a supreme felicity to the author (only he is no traveller) on the Ganges or Hydaspes (Indian streams) to meet a smutty Gentoo ready to burst with laughing at the tale of Bo-Bo! for doubtless it hath been translated into all the dialects of the East. I grieve the less, that Europe should want it. I cannot gather from your letter whether you are aware that a second series of the Essays is published by Moxon, in Dover Street, Piccadilly, called "The Last Essays of Elia," and, I am told, is not inferior to the former. Shall I order a copy for you? and will you accept it? Shall I *lend* you, at the same time, my sole copy of the former volume (Oh! return it) for a month or two? In return, you shall favour me with the loan of one of those Norfolk-bred grunters that you laud so highly; I promise not to keep it above a day. What a funny name Bungay is! I never dreamt of a correspondent thence. I used to think of it as some Utopian town, or borough in Gotham land. I now believe in its existence, as part of merry England.

[*Here are some lines scratched out*]

The part I have scratched out is the best of the letter. Let me have your commands.

CH. LAMB, *alias* ELIA.

DLXXXV. TO REV. HENRY F. CARY

[Oct. 18, 1834.]

Dear Sir,—The unbounded range of munificence presented to my choice, staggers me. What can

twenty votes do for one hundred and two widows! I cast my eyes hopeless among the viduage. N.B. Southey might be ashamed of himself to let his aged mother stand at the top of the list, with his £100 a year and butt of sack. Sometimes I sigh over No. 12, Mrs Carve-ill, some poor relation of mine, no doubt. No. 15 has my wishes, but then she is a Welsh one. I have Ruth upon No. 21. I'd tug hard for No. 24. No. 25 is an anomaly; there can be no Mrs Hogg. No. 34 ensnares me. No. 73 should not have met so foolish a person. No. 92 may bob it as she likes, but she catches no cherry of me. So I have even fixed at hap-hazard, as you'll see.

Yours, every third Wednesday,

C. L.

DLXXXVI. TO THE SAME

[Oct. 1834.]

I protest I know not in what words to invest my sense of the shameful violation of hospitality which I was guilty of on that fatal Wednesday. Let it be blotted from the calendar. Had it been committed at a layman's house, say a merchant's or manufacturer's, a cheesemonger's or greengrocer's, or, to go higher, a barrister's, a member of Parliament's, a rich banker's, I should have felt alleviation, a drop of self-pity. But to be seen deliberately to go out of the house of a clergyman drunk! a clergyman of the Church of England too! not that alone, but of an expounder of that dark Italian Hierophant, an exposition little short of *his* who dared unfold the Apocalypse: divine riddles both; and, without supernal grace vouchsafed, Arks not to be fingered without present blasting to the touchers. And then, from what house! Not a common glebe or vicarage, (which yet had been shameful,) but from a kingly repository of sciences, human and divine, with the primate of England for its guardian, arrayed in public majesty, from which

the profane vulgar are bid fly. Could all those volumes have taught me nothing better! With feverish eyes on the succeeding dawn I opened upon the faint light, enough to distinguish, in a strange chamber, not immediately to be recognised, garters, hose, waistcoat, neckerchief, arranged in dreadful order and proportion, which I knew was not mine own. 'Tis the common symptom on awaking, I judge my last night's condition from. A tolerable scattering on the floor I hail as being too probably my own, and if the candlestick be not removed I assoil myself. But this finical arrangement, this finding every thing in the morning in exact diametrical rectitude, torments me. By whom was I divested? Burning blushes! not by the fair hands of nymphs, the Buffam Graces? Remote whispers suggested that I *coached* it home in triumph. Far be that from working pride in me, for I was unconscious of the locomotion; that a young Mentor accompanied a reprobate old Telemachus; that, the Trojan like, he bore his charge upon his shoulders, while the wretched incubus, in glimmering sense, hiccuped drunken snatches of flying on the bats' wings after sunset. An aged servitor was also hinted at, to make disgrace more complete, one, to whom my ignominy may offer further occasions of revolt (to which he was before too fondly inclining) from the true faith; for, at a sight of my helplessness, what more was needed to drive him to the advocacy of independency? Occasion led me through Great Russell Street yesterday. I gazed at the great knocker. My feeble hands in vain essayed to lift it. I dreaded that Argus Portitor, who doubtless lanterned me out on that prodigious night. I called the Elginian marbles. They were cold to my suit. I shall never again, I said, on the wide gates unfolding, say, without fear of thrusting back, in a light but peremptory air, "I am going to Mr Cary's." I passed by the walls of Balclutha. I had imaged to myself a zodiac

of third Wednesdays irradiating by glimpses the Edmonton dulness. I dreamed of Highmore! I am de-vited to come on Wednesdays. Villanous old age, that, with second childhood, brings linked hand in hand her inseparable twin, new inexperience, which knows not effects of liquor. Where I was to have sate for a sober, middle-aged-and-a-half gentleman, literary too, the neat fingered artist can educe no notions but of a dissolute Silenus, lecturing natural philosophy to a jeering Chromius, or a Mnasilus. Pudet. From the context gather the lost name of

——.

DLXXXVII. TO MRS NORRIS

[Edmonton: November, 1834.]

Dear Mrs Norris,—I found Mary on my return not worse, and she is now no better. I send all my nonsense I could scrape together, and wish your young ladies well thro' them. I hope they will like 'Amwell.' Be in no hurry to return them. Six months hence will do. Remember me kindly to them and to Richard. Also to Mary and her cousin.

Yours truly,
C. LAMB.

Pray give me a line to say you received 'em. I send 'em Wednesday 19th, from the Roebuck.

DLXXXVIII. TO MRS DYER

Dec. 22, 1834.

Dear Mrs Dyer,—I am very uneasy about a *Book*, which I either have lost or left at your house on Thursday. It was the book I went out to fetch from Miss Buffam's while the tripe was frying. It is called "Phillip's Theatrum Poetarum," but it is an English Book. I think I left it in the parlour. It is

Mr Carey's book, and I would not lose it for the world. Pray, if you find it, book it at the Swan, Snow Hill, by an Edmonton stage immediately, directed to Mr Lamb, Church Street, Edmonton, or write to say you cannot find it. I am quite anxious about it. If it is lost, I shall never like tripe again.

With kindest love to Mr Dyer and all,

Yours truly,

C. Lamb.

NOTES

NOTES TO "LETTERS"

ALTHOUGH it has seemed convenient to date the "Elian Era" from the beginning of 1821, the reader is of course aware that the precise date of its inauguration is August 1820, at which time the essay on *The South-Sea House* appeared in the "London Magazine." The headings of former chapters of this edition have had reference to Lamb's literary activity—what he was writing, or where his work was appearing—during a given period, although in most cases his letters themselves are quite silent upon these matters. The same is true of the letters of the Elian Era, although to a lesser extent. It is not until the correspondence with Bernard Barton has become well established that the letters to friends contain allusions to articles that have just appeared, or are just about to appear, in the *Magazine*. Such allusions first begin to become frequent in the invalid days of 1824 and 1825, when he had leisure to write about what he was writing, but when, also, the larger proportion, and the greater part, of his writing was already done. The main influence of the Elian Era upon the correspondence was —almost to suppress it altogether. When we bear in mind that Lamb was now an extremely noticeable writer and rather a noted man, and that therefore nearly all letters received from him at this period were likely to have been preserved by the recipients, we cannot but be struck by the fewness of the letters—even when every note, notelet, and business communication has been added to swell the heap—between the autumn of 1820 and the spring of 1825.

LETTERS CCXXXIV.-CCXLIII. (pp. 1-6).— *Mrs Paris* was a sister of William Ayrton. *Martin's appointments* would seem to refer to an unfortunate issue of the plan of meeting Martin and bringing him along, indicated in Letter CCXXXIII. In that case the arrangement which has placed these two letters under different years is not infeli-

citious, for no doubt while Mr Allsop waited for Martin the time seemed a twelvemonth. *Master Mathew* was Charles Mathews the elder, who was going to give one of his *At Home* entertainments at Highgate. Coleridge speaks of one in January 1820, at which Lamb was not present. As to *Madame Noblet*, Lamb had evidently been urged by the enthusiastic Ayrton that he must go and see her, and had gone, but failed to see her—perhaps owing to an opera bonnet intervening. Hence these surly humours! For *The Decameron*, not that of Boccaccio, see paper on *The Ass* in "Essays and Sketches" (vol. iv. of this edition). *Moriatur* * * *—the missing word is, of course, "Rex." See note on Lamb's political verses in "Poems and Plays" (vol. v. of this edition, p. 416). "This paper will be a choke-pear to some people," refers to the article *Imperfect Sympathies*, with its analysis of the character of (imaginary) Jews, Quakers, Scotsmen, and such like superior races of men.

LETTERS CCXLIV.-CCLIII. (pp. 6-13).—*The beautiful lines* were an "Epistle to Elia, suggested by his essay on New Year's Eve," which appeared in the "London Magazine" for August, and of which the publishers had apparently sent him an MS. copy. The poem was at once a tribute of admiration to the peculiar genius and geniality of Lamb and also an expostulation on account of the pessimism or the sombre paganism pervading that essay. The author of the lines, which will be found quoted fully in Mr Dobell's "Sidelights on Charles Lamb" and are well worth perusal, was not James Montgomery, as Lamb surmises in this letter, but Charles Abraham Elton; a man of leisure, a very fine scholar, an accomplished translator, and to some extent a theological and political controversialist. Lamb's proposed emendation of one of Elton's lines is peculiarly infelicitous, for him. "You have overwhelmed me with your favours": these were evidently presentation copies of Elton's books, those specially referred to being "Specimens of the Classic Poets" (3 vols.) and "The Brothers; a Monody" (1820), referring to the loss of his own sons. Like so many other members of that wonderful galaxy of *Londoners*—or contributors to the "London Magazine"—Elton was a Unitarian. *Baldwyn* is for Lamb's spelling of Baldwin.

The *H.* in the letter to Cowden Clarke is Leigh Hunt, a very great friend of the Cowden Clarkes and of the Novellos. The note to *Allan Cunningham* is undated, but I have placed it here because it has much the appearance of being a tentative expression of contrition for that essay on *Imperfect Sympathies* before alluded to. Mr John Rogers has lately printed an unsigned letter (dated 28th August 1822) in the autograph of Allan Cunningham, in which A. C. regrets his inability to accept his correspondent's welcome invitation. Who the correspondent was the letter does not explicitly say; but it says this: "In the course of eight or ten days I will hazard an evening call on you—your prints and your company will be enough—the addition of Irish whisky would make a feast for the gods." It is at least highly possible that this was in reply to Letter CCXLVII., in which case either Allan Cunningham dated his note wrongly or I have placed this letter too early by a year. Procter (mentioned on p. 15) is better known by his pseudonym of "Barry Cornwall," and *Wainwright* is better remembered by subsequent exploits as forger and poisoner than by *his* pseudonym of "James Weathercock," which was perhaps the next most familiar name to the readers of the "London Magazine" after that of Elia himself.

Letters CCLX.-CCLXX. (pp. 15-24).—The letter to Coleridge has, apart from its intrinsic merits, two points of interest for us; as being probably the origin of the *Dissertation on Roast Pig*, and also as giving something more than a hint that Lamb had been placed in some sort of boarding-school or educational foundation, situated over the river, before the presentation to Christ's Hospital was secured. See in vol. i. of this edition the notes upon the essay just named. *The Opium-Eater* was De Quincey, whose famous "Confession" appeared in the "London Magazine." In the postscript to this letter, as on some other occasions, Lamb uses the word "appropriation" in a sense that has become obsolete, except to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other business men, meaning assignment or bestowal. I have assigned its present place to CCLXIV. conjecturally, and have supplied the Christian name. It is impossible that the *addressée* could have been Thomas Holcroft. Harwood

was his son, and the step-son of Lamb's other friend, Kenny the dramatist. The *Fragment of a Letter* to Mary is a souvenir of that visit to Paris in 1822 of which we know so little and would so much like to know more. Perhaps we should have known more but for the disastrous circumstance that one of Mary's illnesses befell her during that holiday, and so cast a cloud upon the whole adventure. Charles's vacation being expired, he had to return to London and to the India House, leaving Mary behind in the care of his very good friends the Kennys and others. Hence this letter, evidently the instructions of an experienced Parisian, to be acted upon by the convalescent. *John Clare* was a peasant poet and a contributor to the "London." His coming to town and the vogue which he had amongst literary people and social personages, was a kind of small-paper edition of Burns's triumphal entry into the intellectualities and the symposia of eighteenth-century Edinburgh. Clare was so consistently described in magazines and newspapers, on title-pages and in contents, as "The Northamptonshire Peasant," that this may be considered as *his* pseudonym. His books of poetry, published at twice the price of any of Lamb's, ran through their editions like cheap fiction, but are now forgotten. *Howard Payne* (p. 25) was an American, and a dramatic writer of whom his country is sufficiently proud to have built him a monument. If not a great, he was an exceedingly good fellow, and his kindness to the Lambs in the distresses that marred the Paris visit was the foundation of Lamb's friendship for him. The reference to Talme and Shakspeare will be found explained on pp. 26-7.

LETTERS CCLXXI. - CCLXXX. (pp. 26 - 37).—*Barron Field* was a particular friend of Lamb's, of whom, considering their particular friendship, we hear less than one would have expected. His father was physician to Christ's Hospital, but Barron was not himself a Blue-coat boy. He accompanied the Lambs on the visit to Mackery End in Hertfordshire which is described in the Essay of that name (vol i. of this edition, p. 148), and to him was addressed the letter which afterwards appeared in print under the title of *Distant Correspondents* (*Ibid.* p. 209). *Bernard Barton* is not a very important name in literature, on his own account,

though as a poet he had (like Clare) a much greater vogue in his day than the author of *Hester* and of *The Old Familiar Faces* ever attained to; but his entry into the correspondence is a fact of cardinal importance. It is important because it drew from Lamb a series of letters exceeded in value and interest only by the Coleridge and the Manning series, if even by these; and it is important also because one feels that Barton was an influence in Lamb's life, all through the twenties, for which Lamb was the better and we are the richer. Barton was a Quaker, and a clerk in a bank. He felt his clerkship irksome, as Lamb felt his; but, fortunately he had sense enough to take Lamb's advice—given with magnificent and memorable emotion—to have nothing to do with literature as a means of bread-winning (for the foolish man had thought the thing was possible), but to "keep his bank and his bank would keep him." The *Sonnet in the* "Examiner" is, of course, Lamb's own. *John Woolman* was a Quaker writer, and his *Journal* ranks second to nothing in literature as an expression of goodness, and especially of a sincerity, that is rarer than all the virtues, and indeed a kind of miracle. The lady referred to as *My little Wife*, at the foot of p. 32, was very young, a little daughter of the Kenneys, who had apparently accepted him—or claimed for her own—during his sojourn at Versailles. As to *Defoe*, see *Estimate of the Secondary Novels of De Foe* in "Critical Essays" (vol. iii. of this edition) and note thereon. *Mrs M.* (p. 37) is Mrs Monkhouse, a distant kind of cousin of Mrs Wordsworth's. For Mrs Smith, see *The Gentle Giantess* in "Essays and Sketches" (vol. iv. of this edition).

LETTERS CCLXXXI.-CCXC. (pp. 39-49). — *John Bates Dibdin* (born 1798) was the son of Charles Dibdin the younger, and a grandson of Charles Dibdin the nautical song-writer. Canon Ainger tells how young Dibdin, having frequent occasion to do business at the India House, had always selected a certain "little clever man" in preference to the other clerks. There was at this time some considerable curiosity as to who might be the unknown author of the *Elia Essays*, and Dibdin took it into his head that his "little clever man" *was* the man. Having, after longer

scrutiny and some casual but cunningly contrived conversation, convinced himself that his guess was right, he presently sent Lamb a copy of verses (addressed to Colebrook Row) beginning "*I've found thee out, O Elia!*" Lamb was as smart a detective in turn, for next time Dibdin came to the India House he handed him his verses, though there had been no other signature than a big D. Lamb, it will be seen, was for some time in doubt as to the Christian name of this new friend. Dibdin was of delicate health, and died in 1828. *Mr and Mrs Bruton*, who sent the pig, were a sort of second cousins of Charles and Mary Lamb: Lamb's maternal grandmother had been a Bruton who had married a Field. See *Mackery End in Hertfordshire*. In Letter CCLXXXVIII. *G. F.* is for George Fox, and *Sewell* was the author of a History of the Quakers. Miss Coleridge (Sara the younger) was daughter of the poet, and had translated from the Latin, and condensed, Martin Dobrizhoffer's *Account of the Abipones*. "I do not know who wrote *Quarl*:" *sc. Philip Quarl*. Lamb tells elsewhere how he had once in boyhood set out for the discovery of Philip Quarl's Island. *Dunlop* stands for Dunlop's *History of Fiction*.

LETTERS CCXC.-CCXCIX. (pp. 49-62).—*Harwood* is, again, Harwood Holcroft, and *Fanny* is his sister. The Quaker incident (p. 51) is the story of the "three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straitest non-conformity of their sect," with whom Lamb travelled in a stage-coach and breakfasted at an inn. See *Imperfect Sympathies* (vol. i. of this edition, p. 127). *Hartley* (p. 52) is, of course, Hartley Coleridge. "I took up Scott"—for the result see *Ritson* versus *Scott* in "Critical Essays." This ill-used writer was John Scott of Arnwell, the Quaker. "I dined in Parnassus"—namely, at Monkhouse's—"the noble-minded kinsman, by wedlock, of Wordsworth," acquaintance with whom is cited as an instance in proof of Elia's respectability in *Elia's Letter to Robert Southey, Esq.*, what time Southey had (p. 62) "attacked Elia on the score of infidelity." *Leadenhall* (*sc.* Leadenhall Street) is where the India House stood but stands no more.

LETTERS CCC.-CCCXIII. (pp. 63-72).—It is instructive to compare the more humane and "allowing" spirit of the references to Bloomfield's poetry, at pp. 66-7, with the young-mannish severity and contempt expressed in an earlier letter to Manning. There was that in Manning which somehow favoured or provoked such ranknesses in his friend, just as there was that in Barton which favoured the expression of a better and more characteristic mood. For a fresh collation of the letter to Southey (p. 72) I am indebted to the kindness of Miss Warter—thanks to whom, also, I am now enabled to give that magnanimous letter of Southey's which called forth this reply:

MY DEAR LAMB,

On Monday I saw your letter in the "London Magazine," which I had not before had an opportunity of seeing, and I now take the first interval of replying to it.

Nothing could be farther from my mind than any intention or apprehension of any ways offending or injuring ——, a man concerning whom I have never spoken, thought, or felt, otherwise than with affection, esteem, and admiration. If you had let me know in any private or friendly manner, that you felt wounded by a sentence in which nothing but kindness was intended,—or that you feared it might injure the sale of your book—I would most readily and gladly have inserted a note in the next "Review," to qualify and explain what had hurt you; and would have endeavoured earnestly to have expressed myself in such terms as might have satisfied you.

You have rendered this impossible, and I am sorry for it. But I will not engage in controversy with you, to make sport for the Philistines.

The provocation must be strong indeed that can rouse me to do this even with an enemy. And if you can forgive an unintended offence as heartily as I do the way in which you have resented it, there will be nothing to prevent our meeting as we have heretofore done—and feeling towards each other as we have always been wont to do.

Only signify a correspondent willingness on your part,

and send me your address, and my first business next week shall be to reach your door, and shake hands with you and your sister.

Remember me to her most kindly; and believe me,

Yours, with unabated esteem and regard,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

LETTERS CCCXIV.-CCCXXXI. (pp. 73-95).—In those letters we see the ominous beginnings of a break up of Lamb's physical soundness, and have hints of how the process was always tending to merge into another character, affecting his mental sanity. In the letter to Ainsworth we come, not for the first time, on a curious limitation—only a provisional and accidental one, I believe, for he was quite capable of passing beyond it had the time ever come—in Lamb's critical range. His inability—rather his unwillingness—to see any greatness in Byron's work is another, almost the only other, instance. The *blackballing* of Lamb (p. 81) appears to have consisted of a resolution voted by some Quaker book club *not* to admit his books into their collection. What had been "handsomely offered" to Bernard Barton (p. 84) was a useful little present of £1200 raised for his benefit by "some of the wealthier members"—for Barton was but a poor man—"of his own family."

Southey's Book (p. 86) was *The Book of the Church*—a book which it is very curious to see so little reprinted. *Robert Blake* is for William Blake. *The Society with the affected Name* may have been the "Society for Ameliorating the Condition of Infant Chimney-Sweepers." The letter to Hood now for the first time appears in its right place and properly collated. As a result, what has hitherto been printed "He is by far the foremost of the Savans"—quite unintelligible and unconnectable with the context—is now given as "He is fond of the notice of the Savans." The *futile effort* (so called at p. 95) was *Blakesware in H——shire.*

LETTERS CCCXXXII.-CCCXLVIII. (pp. 96-115).—*The Foul Fiend Flibbertigibit* was an old acquaintance and perhaps a frequent caller upon Lamb, *teste* the letter to

Godwin which I have placed in 1804. *Colburn* (at p. 104) stands for Colburn's magazine "The New Monthly." *Irving, the Scotch Preacher*, was Edward Irving, Carlyle's friend. For a review of the *Chessiad*, see "Critical Essays." *De Quincey's Parody* means Lamb's parody of De Quincey. The author of the epigram quoted at p. 108 was one of the *South Sea House* notabilities. See the notes to that essay in vol. i. That gift of *The Book of the Church* remained a long time unacknowledged! For *Barbara S.*, see notes to "Last Essays of Elia," and correct the same by reference to the Preface to "Critical Essays."

LETTERS CCCXLIX.-CCCLXXVII. (pp. 117-136).—*Emma* (p. 118) is Emma Isola, a young girl of Italian parentage, whom the Lambs in the end adopted. See note on the verses *To a Young Friend* in "Poems and Plays." *Sir George Beaumont*, one of the many friends and Mæcenases of Coleridge. The Norris letter (CCCLII.) is placed here, but may belong to another time. For the subject of the letter to Coleridge, see *Review of Hood's "Odes and Addresses"* in "Critical Essays." *The Quotidian* (p. 127) is, of course, the "Every Day Book." It should be understood that while Charles and Mary Lamb were occupying Mr Allsop's rooms at Enfield, William Hone was occupying their cottage at Colebrook Row. Hence the directions as to the locality of certain volumes rich in Londonensian lore. *This invitation is ingenuous.* See Quatrains to the editor of Every Day Book in "Poems and Plays." The letter to Southey (CCCLXII.) is now for the first time correctly dated and collated. *I came home in a week* may mean within a week of Hone's visit to them at Enfield.

LETTERS CCCLXXIII.-CCCXCVII. (pp. 138-159).—The article containing the "quotation from the Colliers" is *The Ass.* See "Essays and Sketches." The letters to Ollier have reference to the contributions to the "New Monthly Magazine" principally *the Popular Fallacies.* Ollier, as an experienced publisher, had been recruited into that service. *Darley* (p. 146) wrote on the drama and dramatic poets in the "London," and is always spoken of as "the author of *Sylvia*," though *Sylvia* is seldom read. It is eminently

worth reading. The Dibdin letter (CCCXCIII.) has been sadly mangled and suppressed by Canon Ainger. What would people say to me had I, being a Scotsman, suppressed the blasphemous disrespect for a fellow-countryman of mine which is uttered in this same epistle? In proof of the poetic talent of John Lamb, senior, his book exists to this day—but copies of it are hard to find and very dear to buy! The "jolly and freakish" mood (p. 158) still continued when Lamb played the prank of making Bernard Barton suppose (Letter CCCXCVII.) that he had his doubts of Mitford's honesty and was beginning to feel uneasy about his money. This is a particularly subtle product of the happiest Elian movements.

LETTERS CCCXCVIII.-CCCCXVII. (pp. 160-181).—For Randal Norris, Sub-Treasurer of the Middle Temple, see the letter of 27th September 1796; also notes to *A Death Bed* in "Essay and Sketches." The *News that spoiled a Merry Meeting* concerned the death of Hood's first child. See *On an Infant Dying as soon as Born*, in "Poems and Plays." The terrible words which Lamb (p. 169) repented of having written were *broad-brimmed*—applied to the frame of the picture and the calling, or religious mark and denomination, of the recipient. For *Martin's Belshazzar*, see the essay *On the Decay of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art* in "Last Essays of Elia." The letter to Patmore contains a mixture of true and false; the interest in the welfare of Dash, at least, is genuine. *I'd Frankenstein them* is a very prettily contrived compliment, Mrs Shelley (Mary Godwin) being the author of that famous book, which was published in the famous year 1818. The letter to Sir John Stoddart strangely recalls the days of 1804, the record of which is contained in Mary's letters rather than Charles's. *My Engraving* (p. 177) was doubtless the rough etching of Lamb made by his India House colleague, Brook Pulham, and sold in the print shops of the time. The drama (p. 178), *Founded on Crabbe's "Confidant,"* of which we hear again, was "The Wife's Trial."

LETTERS CCCCXVIII.-CCCCXLI. (pp. 181-203).—

It is not quite certain whether the *Thing in two Acts* was the above-mentioned "Wife's Trial" or another. *Hyder-Alley* (p. 182) shows how oft in time and space Lamb would willingly go to gather the constituents of a pun—to farthest India in space, to the language of Pindar in time. The *Feeble Counteraction in the Table-Book* was a charming prose version of Hood's "Plea of the Midsummer Fairies," under the title of *The Defeat of Time*. The reference to *William Jerdan* is merely sympathetic, I fancy. Jerdan and Hood were well acquainted, but certainly Jerdan and Lamb were not, and I hardly think they would have liked one another on acquaintance. Letter CCCCXXVI. shows that the privilege of "settling for life" (once more!) had to be paid for as usual in very dear coin—a precipitation of Mary's illnesses. This is one of the most severe attacks that we have the account of. The lines on Waltham Cross have a contemporary reference—namely, to the less ceremonial removal of Queen Charlotte's remains, on their way to Brunswick for interment. See note to these verses in "Poems," where I inadvertently wrote "Hanover" for "Brunswick." The portrait of Lamb by Henry Meyer (spelt Myer at p. 200) will be found prefixed to "Essays of Elia" (vol. i. of this edition); that by Hazlitt, representing Lamb in the dress of a Venetian senator, is given in one of these volumes of "Letters"—I hope, but know not! "I skip the battles" (p. 203) refers to Hazlitt's Life of Napoleon. "Traditions about one Clarke" (p. 204), who *had* been a schoolmaster there: only, it was Cowden's father, who was assisted by his son.

LETTERS CCCCLI.-CCCCLXXIX. (pp. 212-241).—*Mitford's Salamander God* is evidently a slip of the pen for "Martin's." Laman Blanchard's *elegant volume* was "Lyric Offerings," with a dedication to Lamb. Blanchard is mainly remembered now as a sonnet-writer, and those by which he is known were addressed not to his mistress's eyebrow but to his mother. "Christmas" (p. 220) was by Lamb's later favourite, young Moxon. *Your Almanack is funny* has reference to "Poor Humphrey's Calendar" (1829), one of poor Hone's last ventures in publishing. *The Anti-Capulets* are, of course, the Montagus—Basil Montagu of Bedford

Square, and his people. "Who is Badman or Bed-em?" Badams is the name, and he was a friend of Carlyle. As to "The Scotch murders" (p. 224), one of the murderers at least was an alien: Burke was an Irishman and probably Hare was an Englishman. At any rate, I never heard of a Scotsman called Hare in my life. The name doesn't suit the nation. "Did you see a sonnet of mine?" (p. 225)—it will be seen quoted in the succeeding letter. The said letter has been collated by Canon Ainger, who for "bed-damned to her" reads "Bed-dom'd to her" which is funnier as well as less profane. Ainsworth's Dictionary does not contain *abactor* (a driver away = a sheep-stealer, a cattle-thief) but has an entry under *abactus*, which reads comically, coming so near the actual word "sheep-stealer" as it does, yet not naming it. Letter CCCCLXV. ("Dear Lamb—You are an impudent varlet") is a little civility in exchange for Hood's friendly insult of inserting in *The Gem* a little thing of his own in Lamb's manner and signing it Charles Lamb! For *Field's Appendix*, and also the poem called the *Kangaroo*, the reader may refer to "Critical Essays" and the notes thereto. The letter to Walter Wilson (p. 235), probably enclosed the paper on *De Foe's Secondary Novels*, already referred to. The ode was the "Pindaric Ode to the Treadmill," beginning

> "Inspire my spirit, Spirit of De Foe!"

But the ode did not appear in Wilson's book; it will be found in "Poems and Plays," p. 115. As to *Bijoux*, Lamb could not read French, and if he knew the correct spelling of any French word he made a point of dissembling that uncockney knowledge. The sonnet sent to Rogers on the loss of his brother (p. 239) will be found in "Poems and Plays."

LETTERS CCCCLXXX.-CCCCXCIX. (pp. 242-267).—The re-awakening of a closer interest in the Highgate household is a thing one is glad to find so marked in those days towards the close. The Serenata for two voices, with instrumental directions, is a considerable achievement for one who "had no ear." The *Packet of unknown contents* (p. 247)

contained Wilson's "Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe," in which Lamb had his own contribution of some rare critical pages. Again, see (p. 253) how happy Lamb is when writing to Barton. There was about Barton a Quakerly simple goodness and rightness of heart with which Lamb was in rare sympathy, and the sense of contact with something he liked so much seldom failed to inspire him, by making him happy. One wishes he had written oftener to Barton in the last three years of his life. I verily believe he would have lived longer. I have left the Coleridge letter in its time-out-of mind place, but I believe that its real date is some time in the week ending 15th January 1820 and the sonnet referred to is *Fancy in Nubibus*. Which of the Calamy's is here (p. 255) confessed to be good reading does not appear. Father, sons, and grandsons, they were stalwart theological writers, and stout men of conscience, in their day, the seventeenth, and early eighteenth century. Old libraries in Scotland used to be strewn with their works. For Miss James, see note to *Sarah James of Beguildy* in "Poems and Plays." It was with her sister, Mrs Parsons —not with Miss James, as I inadvertently set it down in the said note—that Mary Lamb was domiciled at Alpha Road during the last years of her life. I have placed the undated Kenney letter here because Kenney had a successful, and exceedingly much *liked*, play running in 1829. The Williams correspondence is another fortunate gift of accident towards the end of Lamb's life. The letter to Mrs Hazlitt (Sarah Stoddart), and still more its reference to Mrs Reynolds—sempiternal old lady, as a female annuitant ought to be—brings us pleasantly back once more to the days of Charles and Mary's earliest housekeeping in Southampton Buildings and the Temple. The *dear, fine, silly old angel* (p. 226) seems to be the worthy Fuller.

LETTERS DIII.-DXXXII. (pp. 273-302).—The verses (acrostics upon the names of Mrs Williams and her daughters) referred to on p. 274, and onward, will be found in the "Poems." In the letter to Moxon "your and my Rogers" has reference to the great interest Rogers took in young Moxon, advancing him £500 with which to go into business as a publisher, and giving him his books to publish—as we

shall presently see. Letter DX. is a little instance corroborative of a notorious fact; that Charles Lamb, who so memorably "gathered himself up unto the old things" yet had no great sympathy with souvenir hunting and relic treasuring. What a charming, quiet letter is that (DXII.) to Mrs Hazlitt—from a rather old gentlemen to a rather old lady, who had known each other in such distant days—and how the picture remains with us, of Charles Lamb, at the end of his long and resultless walk across country, contentedly receiving his cup of ale from "a very good woman behind a counter," and quietly falling to one simple if cannibal feast which he had brought along in a sandwich-box! A man of his years, however, ought to have learned to speak the truth, which is a lesson taught even to the youngest understandings. It is, unfortunately, quite impossible to reconcile what is said at the foot of p. 282 as to the occasion of the *Free Thoughts* with what is said in the letter to Ayrton on p. 279. The book sent to Barton (p. 285) was doubtless "Album Verses." 34 Southampton Buildings, where the Lambs came to stay for a while, is the subject of a picture which has been erroneously placed in vol. i. *The French heroism* (p. 287) means the bravery of the good French people in driving out the Bourbons, though the whole power of Europe in arms had imposed that worthless dynasty upon them, as a conquered and seemingly ruined nation, only fifteen years before. "I have brought my sister to Enfield," possibly from Southampton Buildings, but perhaps from some private madhouse at Fulham, where she had been placed during her periods of mental eclipse in recent years. This letter (namely, DXXII.) is wrongly placed as to year or else wrongly dated by Lamb as to the month, for in the preceding letter to Cary, dated from Enfield on May 6th, 1831, he says that his sister is sitting reading Cary's Euripides. I had not looked into this point when making my arrangement. "Scamper off with this"—I take "this" to have been the epigram which I have entitled *A Horsey Pair*. (See "Poems and Plays," pp. 204 and 421). Perhaps there was an intentional sympathy with the subject in the choice of the word "scamper." *The R.A. here memorised*—that is to say, in *Recollections of a Late Royal Academician*, which

will be found in "Critical Essays" — was contributed to Moxon's unprosperous venture "The Englishman's Magazine." "The Anecdotes of E." refers to *Ellistoniana*, for which see "Last Essays of Elia" (vol. ii. of this edition). Dr Cresswell was the Vicar of Enfield, and the book sent him was "Satan in Search of a Wife." *Devil's Money* (p. 297) was rashly estimated profits therefrom. *The Great Erasmians* was a class in Christ's Hospital, below the Grecians. Lamb's distinction of a Deputy Grecian does not now exist in the school. But no doubt it will be re-established as soon as the school contains another Charles Lamb. "The Fool they call Barker" was a rather vivacious person, as I gather from his preface to the translation of Buttmann's Greek Grammar (his "Parriana," the book in which he so deeply injured poor George Dyer, is not so near at hand) and he is described in the title-page as E. H. Barker, Esq., of Thetford, Norfolk, and formerly of Trinity College, Cambridge. In the said Preface he quotes from "A work more censured than read," and at the end of the quotation one finds that the work in question is "Parriana."

LETTERS DXXXIV.-DLIX. (pp. 304-318).—*The Measureless Beethams* seem to be glanced at also in *Popular Fallacies*, as well as in *Many Friends* (see "Last Essays of Elia" and "Essays and Sketches" respectively). Miss Fryer was a former school-fellow of Emma's at Dulwich. She is the "Maria" of the sonnet *Harmony in Unlikeness*. The books spoken of on p. 307 are Cunningham's "Maid of Elvar" and Barry Cornwall's "English Songs," both published by Moxon early in the year. The epistle referred to was an Epistle to Charles Lamb, Esq. "The poor 'Reflector'" (p. 310) was an extremely short-lived venture of Moxon's; as the Satin epitaph hath it, it died in the third week of its age. The letter to Dr Asbury is a possession for ever. The tone and diction of the letter to Hone (p. 316) is accounted for by the fact that Hone had passed into a religious vein. Why Forster is accused of brandy and water, and why Charles Lamb calls it damned, I do not know. Letter DLVI. has reference to the aforesaid Prologue to Sheridan Knowle's play, "The Wife."

LETTERS DLXI.-DLXXXVIII. (pp. 324-345).—Lamb's brave decision not to leave Mary, even when there was nothing else for it but to fix her where she would be always under medical care and observation, has led to a curious kind of literary rumour, if one may say so, that he had gone mad in his later days. This notion arose among people who knew only fragments of the fact and were perhaps quite incapable of understanding the motive or the sentiment.

Ariadne. See note to essay on *Decay of the Imaginative Faculty*, vol ii. of this edition. The person execrated so tremendously on p. 327 is Taylor, of Taylor & Hessey. As publisher of the "London Magazine" he claimed proprietary rights in the Elia Essays, and was now threatening an injunction of Moxon's publication. The letter to Mr and Mrs, with its many postscripts, will be read many times by the judicious. *Poor Henry* (p. 333) was the brother of Rogers, already referred to. The letter to Hone (p. 335) was intended to help him—"in an hour of need"—once more. It was for other eyes than his own; hence the formal guise of it. Dover Street (p. 336) was where Moxon's house and shop were. *Louisa Martin* was an old friend, as we know. Letter DLXXXII. was to the son of Coleridge's host. Coleridge had lately died; and this note ought to be compared with the little commemorative passage *On the Death of Coleridge*, which will be found at the end of "Critical Essays." It is interesting to know that Mr Childs of Bungay, to whom DLXXXIV. is written, was the owner of a printing business at Bungay, which afterwards became that of Richard Clay & Sons, by whom all the volumes of this edition, except the "Letters," have been printed. The letter to Mrs Norris shows he had lately called on his old and earliest friends to see how the world went with them. It was going but painfully with him, but he had nearly done with it.

INDEX TO THE WORKS

CONTAINED IN VOLS. I.-X.

n refers to the Notes appended by Lamb himself

"A LONDONER" (signature of Lamb), IV. 10
A Very Woman, *Extract*, X. 179
Abbey, the Tombs in the, II. 113
Acting, Essay on the new style of, III. 40
Actors, Essay on the Religion of, III. 87, 312
Actors, Essay on some of the Old, I. 263
Actors, the Old, III. 62, 308
Addison, reference to, IX. 350*n*
Aders, C., Lines to, V. 139, 413
Adrasta, *Extract*, X. 257
Adventures of Ulysses, VII. 117
Akenside, Reference to, IX. 99*n*
Alaham, *Extract*, IX. 12
"Album Verses," Contributions to, V. 107, 108, 115, 119, 121, 125, 128, 130, 133, 136
Album Verses and Acrostics of uncertain Date, V. 147-168, 414
Alcazar, Battle of, *Extract*, IX. 70
Alchemist, the, *Extract*, IX. 154
All Fools', *Extract*, IX. 174
All Fools' Day, I. 83
Allde, Edward, Reference to, IX. 86*n*
Alleyn, Reference to, IX. 273*n*
All's Lost by Lust, *Extract*, IX. 335
Allsop, Thomas, II. xxxii; III. 331
Ambiguities arising from Proper Names, IV. 32, 280
Ambitious Statesman, the, *Extract*, X. 325
Amicus Redivivus, II. 119
"An Old Boy" (signature of Lamb), IV. 100
Andronicus, *Extract*, X. 292
Angel Help, V. 118
Angel, the Child, II. 182
Angelo, Michael, reference to, IV. 122
Anger, VIII. 55
Annual Anthology, contribution to, V. 80
Antipodes, the, *Extract*, X. 248
Antiquity, Lamb on, I. 16
"Antonio," Epilogue to, V. 368*n*
Antonio's Revenge, *Extract*, IX. 209
Ape, the, V. 98, 403
Appeal from the Shades, an, IV. 1, 277
Appius and Virginia, X. 17

Applebee, Caroline Maria, Lines in Album of, V. 161
Apsey, Sarah, an Acrostic, V. 168
Arden of Feversham, IX. 86
Aristophanes, *Extract*, X. 267*n*
Aristotle, reference to, IX. 100*n*
Arraignment of Paris, the, *Extract*, IX. 65
Art, Modern, Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Production of, II. 148
Ashbury, Dr, Lines in the Album of, V. 159
Ashbury, Mrs, Lines in the Album of, V. 159
Asparagus Garden, the, *Extract*, X. 246
Ass, the, IV. 222, 298
Atheists' Tragedy, the, *Extract*, X. 44
Athenæum, Contributions to the, II. 148; III. 95, 262; IV. 252; V. 144-146
Aunt Hetty. *See* Lamb, Hetty
Australian Poetry, first fruits of, III. 188
Autobiography, Charles Lamb's, IV. 261, 304
Autobiography of Mr Munden, III. 83

BABSON, J. E., Eliana collected by, I. xvi-xvii
Bachelor's Complaint, I. 253
Bacon, Reference to, IV. 184, 233
Ballad from the German, V. 86, 201
Ballad of Rich and Poor, a, V. 86, 401
Bannister, Jack, I. 275-280
Barbara S——, II. 105
Barry, Ludowick, IX. 361; Ram Alley, *Extract*, IX. 122
Barton (Bencher), I. 178
Barton, Bernard, lines to, V. 121, 408
Barton, Lucy, lines in the album of, V. 149, 414
Bastard, the, *Extract*, X. 277
Bastwick, reference to, IV. 188
Battle, Sarah, I. 64 *et seq.*, 301
Beaumont, Francis, *Extract*, X. 370; Triumph of Love, *Extract*, X. 85
Beaumont, Francis, *and* John Fletcher; Cupid's Revenge, *Extract*, X. 81; Maid's Tragedy, *Extract*, X. 73; Philaster, *Extract*, X. 62; References to, by Lamb, IV. 125; V. 52; X. 77*n*
Beasts in the Tower, the, VIII. 132
Beauty and the Beast, VIII. 221
Beggar Man, the, VIII. 102
Beggars in the Metropolis, I. 228
Behn, Mrs Aphra, *Extract*, X. 343, 344
Belphegor, *Extract*, X. 335
Benchers of the Inner Temple, I. 166
Bensley, I. 265-6, 268-9
Bigod, Ralph (John Fenwick), I. 47, 300, 311; II. 146-7, 270

Birthday Thought, a, VIII. 180
Blakesmoor in H——shire, II. 5, 258
Blakesware, II. 258
Blindness, VIII. 56
Bloody Brother, the, *Extract*, X. 137
Blurt, Master Constable, IX. 285
Boccaccio, reference to, IX. 12*n*
Bonduca, *Extract*, X. 117
Books and Reading, detached thoughts on, II. 42
Books with one Idea in them, III. 154, 320
Bourne, Vincent, I. 233-4, 311-12; Latin Poems of, Essay on, III. 255; Review of, III. 336; Translation of, V. 170-187, 415
Boy and the Skylark, VIII. 92
Boy and the Snake, VIII. 21
Boyer, I. 35-41, 229; IV. 73, 226
Br——'s Religio Dramatici, III. 87
Brazen Age, the, *Extract*, IX. 254
Breakfast, VIII. 106
Bride, the, *Extract*, X. 263
Brinsley, I. 196
Broken Doll, the, VIII. 47
Broken Heart, the, X. 191
Brome, Richard, IX. 364; X. 346, 373; Antipodes, *Extract*, X. 248; Asparagus Garden, *Extract*, X. 246; Late Lancashire Witches, *Extract*, IX. 275, 279
Brooke, Lord. *See* Fulke Greville
Brothers, the, *Extract*, X. 225
Brother's Reply, the, VIII. 118
Brown, Bartlemy, IV. 260
Brutus of Alba, *Extract*, X. 319
Buchanan, George, IV. 146, 292
Buckhurst, Lord. *See* Sackville, Thomas
Burial Societies, IV. 34, 280
Burnaby, *Extract*, X. 345
Burney, Edward Francis ("E. B."), I. 112-13, 303
Burney, Martin Charles, Sonnet to, V. 107, 405
Burney, Miss, Sonnet to, V. 109
Burns, reference to, IV. 247
Burrell, Jack, IV. 260
Burrell, Miss, as Don Giovanni, III. 47-9
"Burton, Junior" (signature of Lamb), IV. 86
Burton, Robert, III. 1; V. 283
Busby, IV. 146, 292
Bussy, D'Ambois, IX. 184, 189
Bussy, D'Ambois, his revenge, IX. 191
Butterfly, the, VIII. 5
Byron's conspiracy, IX. 176; tragedy, IX. 179

CÆSAR and Pompey, *Extract*, IX. 193, 195

Cambridge, lines written at, V. 108, 406
Campe, IV. 260
Captain Jackson, II. 78
Captain Starkey, IV. 215, 297
Carew, Lady Elizabeth, X. 351
Carlisle, Sir Anthony, II. 39, 261
Case is altered, *Extract*, IX. 129
Catechist, the young, V. 122, 408
Catiline, his conspiracy, *Extract*, IX. 162
Celebrated Female Performer, Lines to a, V. 107, 405
Cellini, Benvenuto, reference to, IV. 122
Cervantes, reference to, IX. 236*n*; X. 12*n*
Challenge for Beauty, *Extract*, IX. 267, 272
Chamberlain, Robert, *Extracts* from, X. 265
"Champion," contributions to, IV. 81; V. 109, 110
Changeling, the (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 30
Changes, or Love in a Maze, *Extract*, X. 234
Chapman, George, IX. 198, 198*n*, 362; X. 350, 352, 358; All Fools, *Extract*, IX. 174; Bussy D'Ambois, *Extract*, IX. 184, 189, 191; Byron's Conspiracy, *Extract*, IX. 176; Byron's Tragedy, *Extract*, IX. 179; Cæsar and Pompey, *Extract*, IX. 193, 195; Commendatory Verses, *Extract*, X. 102; Gentleman Usher, *Extract*, IX. 182
Chapman, George, and James Shirley, Tragedy of Philip Chabot, *Extract*, IX. 199, 265
Character, a, IV. 195, 295
Character of the late Elia, IV. 255, 303
Charity, VIII. 127
Chaste Maid in Cheapside, *Extract*, IX. 289
Chaucer, reference to, IX. 306*n*
Cheap gifts, V. 144, 413
Chettle, Henry, IX. 360; Hoffman's Tragedy, *Extract*, IX. 104
Chettle, Henry, and Anthony Munday—Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon, *Extract*, IX. 100
Childhood, V. 61
Child's Memorandum Book, lines written in, VIII. 59
Chimney-sweepers, the praise of, I. 217
Choosing a name, VIII. 9
Choosing a profession, VIII. 105
Christening, the, V. 128, 410
Christmas, a few words on, IV. 120, 289
Christmas Day, 1797, lines written on, V. 79, 397
Christ's Hospital, five and thirty years ago, I. 23
Christ's Hospital, recollections of, IV. 63, 282
Chronicle History of Perkin Warbeck, X. 207
City Madam, *Extract*, X. 169
City Night-cap, the, X. 286
Clarence songs, III. 253, 254, 335

Cleanliness, VIII. 30
Clock striking, VIII. 145
Coffee slips, the, VIII. 148
Coleridge, Sarah, lines addressed to, V. 62, 391
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor—Cambridge, at, II. xxxv; Christ's Hospital, life at, I. 299; "Comberbatch," as, I. 49-50, 300; Essay on the death of, III. 264, 336; early works of, II. xxxv-xxxvii; Hogarth, on, III. 117-8; Lamb and, relations between, II. xix-xx, xxv, xliv; III. 293; V. 51; IX. 209; lines addressed to, V. 62, 391; Middleton's friendship for, I. 299-300; quoted, I. 135, 136; "Remorse," prologue to, V. 373
Colet, I. 102
Collier, J. Payne, IV. 222, 298
Collier, Jeremy, III. 269-70; IV. 225
Collins, reference to, IX. 217
Comberbatch. *See* Coleridge
Comedy of Manners, I. 281
Comedy of Old Fortunatus, *Extract*, IX. 222
Comedy of the Last Century, Essay on the Artificial, I. 282
Comic Tales, etc., by C. Dibdin the younger, III. 244
Commendatory Verses (T. Rawlins), X. 265
Commendatory Verses (T. L.), X. 297
Confessions of a Drunkard, II. 195, 274-6; "Elia" on, IV. 114
Confessions of H. F. V. H. Delamore, Esq., IV. 112, 288
Confidant, the, VIII. 135
Congreve, reference to, I. 283 *et seq.*; X. 275*n*
Conquest of Prejudice, VIII. 159
Conrady, Mrs, II. 223-6
Conspiracy, the, X. 260
Convalescent, the, II. 66
Cooke, G. F., as Lear, III. 15, 296-7
Cooke, Joseph, X. 371; Green's Tu Quoque, *Extract*, X. 148
Cooke's Richard the Third, III. 11
Corbet, Peter, IV. 259
Cornwall, Barry, I. 136; "Marcian Colonna," III. 195, 327; Sonnet to, V. 111, 407
Coventry, Thomas, I. 171, 175-6, 309
Cowley, Abraham, IX. 265; X. 375; "The Guardian," *Extract*, X. 274
Cowper, III. 255; IV. 244; X. 294*n*; lines to, V. 63
Crashaw, X. 183*n*
Crawford, Mrs, II. 112
Critical Essays, vol. III.
Criticism, fragments of (1) III. 269, 337; (2) III. 286; (3) III. 288
"Crito" (signature of Lamb), IV. 31

Crowne, John, X. 353-4, 356, 377; Ambitious Statesman, *Extract*, X. 325; Married Beau, *Extract*, X. 335; Thyestes, *Extract*, X. 327
Crumbs to the Birds, VIII. 11
Cunningham, Allen, I. 304; III. 331
Cupid's Revenge, (prose), VI. 331
Cupid's Revenge (verse), X. 81
C. V. L. *See* Le Grice, Chas. Valentine
Cyrus, Wars of, *Extract*, IX. 90

DA VINCI's pictures, lines to, V. 92, 93
Danger of confounding Moral with Personal deformity, IV. 23, 280
Daniel, Samuel, IX. 249*n*, 361; Hymen's Triumph, *Extracts*, IX. 123, 124
Daubeny, Miss, lines in the album of, V. 152
Davenport, Robert, IV. 241, 242, 302; X. 375; City Night-cap, *Extract*, X. 286; King John and Matilda, *Extract*, X. 282
David, VIII. 172
David in the Cave of Adullam, VIII. 176
D. (Dawe), III. 134 *et seq.*, 319
Day, John, X. 355, 374; Parliament of Bees, *Extract*, X. 267, 270
Deathbed, a, IV. 263, 394
"Debtor and Creditor," Epilogue to, V. 374
Decker, Thomas, IX. 99*n*, 234*n*, 363, 366; X. 179*n*, 351, 373; Honest Whore, *Extract*, IX. 234, 235; Old Fortunatus, *Extract*, IX. 222; Satiro Mastix, *Extract*, IX. 229, 234
Decker, Thomas, and John Webster, Westward Hoe, *Extract*, IX. 237
Decker, Thomas, and Philip Massinger, Virgin Martyr, *Extract*, X. 177
Decker, Thomas, and William Rowley, Witch of Edmonton, IX. 350
Defeat of Time, the, VII. 233
Defoe, I. 74; IV. 58, 59, 115, 188; Essay on Secondary Novels of, III. 249; Review of, III. 334
De Quincey, IV. 292
Dessert, the, VIII. 151
Devil's Law Case, the, X. 36, 40
Dialogue between a Mother and Child, V. 91, 402
Dibdin, C., Comic Tales by, III. 244; Review of, III. 334
Dibdin, John Bates, III. 334
Discontent and Quarrelling, VIII. 13
Dissertation upon Roast Pig, I. 241.
Distant Correspondents, I. 209
Doctor Dodypol, IX. 108
Dodd, I. 270-273

Dodsley, IX. 99*n*, 266*n*
Dog Days, IV. 213, 296
Donne, X. 71*n*
Don Quixote, X. 336
Dorset, Earl of. *See* Sackville, Thomas
Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon, *Extract*, IX. 100
Dramatic Poets, Specimens of English, Vols. IX.-X.
Drayton, iv. 58; X. 116, 120*n*
Dream-children, I. 201
Drew, Thomas, X. 253
Drunkard, Confessions of a, II. 195
Drury Lane, Lamb's Farce at, II. lii
Dry Book, Observations on a, III. 284
Dryden, III. 269-70; IX. 12*n*
Duchess of Suffolk, the, *Extract*, X. 253
Duchess of Malfy, the, *Extract*, X. 21
Dunstan, Sir Jeffery, Reminiscence of, IV. 235, 299
D'Urfey, X. 344, 377; Don Quixote, X. 336
Duty of a Brother, VIII. 49
Dyer, George, I. 19-20; II. lxviii; Amicus Redivivus, II. 119 *et seq.*, 266-8; Character of, I. 19-22, 298

EARS, a Chapter on, I. 74
"Edax" (signature of Lamb), IV. 49
Edax on Appetite, IV. 41, 281
Edward the Second, *Extract*, IX. 56
Edward the Third, *Extract*, IX. 91
Elia to his Correspondents, IV. 107, 287; Elia on his Confessions of a Drunkard, IV. 114, 289; Elia, Essays of, Vols. I. and II.; Elia, Letter of, to Robert Southey Esqre., III., 221, 328
Elia, Bridget (*see also* Lamb, Mary), I. 72-3, 109, 141, 147, 148-156, 208, 306
Elia, James, I. 141-147, 208, 305-6
Eliana, collected by Babson, I. xvi-xvii
Elliston, to the Shade of, II. 31, 260
Ellistoniana, II. 35
Emma, learning Latin, V. 123
End of May, the, VIII. 42
English Dramatic Poets, Specimens of, Vols. IX. and X.
English Friar, *Extract*, X. 342
English Monsieur, the, *Extract*, X. 311
English Traveller, the, *Extract*, IX. 259
"Englishman's Magazine," contributions to, II. 31, 136 III. 133, 255; V. 125
Envy, VIII. 1
Epicedium, V. 125, 409
Epigrams, V. 195-204
Epitaph upon a Young Lady, V. 91, 402
Essays and Sketches, Vol. IV.

Evans, I. 5-6
"Every Day Book," contributions to, IV. 210, 213, 215, 220, 222, 227, 229, 235; V. 113
"Examiner," the, contributions to, I. 110; III. 40, 43, 47, 49, 53, 54, 57, 130, 154, 179, 185, 188; V. 103, 108, 109
Example, the, *Extract*, X. 235
Excursion, by Wordsworth, III. 321
Eyes, VIII. 138
Eyton, IV. 260

F.—Godfather to Elia, I. 196-7
Faces, the old familiar, V. 82, 399
Fair Maid of the Exchange, *Extract*, IX. 246
Fair Quarrel, a, *Extract*, IX. 321
Fairy, the, VIII, 158
Faithful Shepherdess, Fletcher's, X. 88, 102
Fallacies, Popular, II. 208
False One, the, X. 121
Falstaff, Letters of, III. 179; Review of, III. 323
Fancy employed on Divine Subjects, V. 62
Fane, X. 346
Fane, jun., Sir R., X. 356
Fanshawe, Sir Richard, Extracts from, X. 299, 376
Farmhouse, the, (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 20
Fatal Dowry, *Extract*, X. 174
Fatal Jealousy, *Extract*, X. 309
Father's Wedding-day, the, (Mrs Leicester' sSchool), VII. 53
"Faulkner," Godwin's, Prologue to, V. 370
Faustus, Dr, IX. 43
Favell, I. 43-4
Fawn, the, IX. 215
Feigned Courage, VIII. 45
Fenwick, John. *See* Bigod, Ralph
Field, Barron, I. 155, 308, 310; III. 188, 324
Field, Esther, lines in the album of, V. 165
Field, Maria L., V. 167
Field, Mrs Barron, lines in the album of, V. 165
Field, Nathaniel, Extracts from, X. 144, 174, 371
Field, Rev. Matthew, I. 35-37
First Going to Church (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 97
First of April, the, VIII. 27
First Tooth, the, VIII. 24
Fisher, Jasper, X. 373; True Trojans, *Extract*, X. 255
Flecknor, Richard, X. 375; Love's Dominion, *Extract*, X. 278
Fletcher, John, IV. 227; IX. 69*n*, 99*n*; X. 73, 77*n*, 102*n*, 110, 115, 136*n*, 183*n*, 275*n*, 370, 372; Bloody Brother, *Extract*, X. 137; Bonduca, *Extract*, X. 117; Faithful Shepherdess, *Extract*, X. 88, 103; False One, *Extract*,

121; Love's Pilgrimage, *Extract*, X. 140; Thierry and Theodoret, *Extract*, X. 110; Two noble Kinsmen, *Extract*, X. 125; Wit without Money, *Extract*, X. 107
Fletcher, John, and Francis Beaumont, Cupid's Revenge, X. 81; Philaster, *Extract*, X. 62
Floating Island, X. 258
Fombelle, IV. 260
Force of Habit, VIII. 140
Ford, John, IX. 99*n*, 366; X. 115*n*, 169*n*, 183, 372; Broken Heart, *Extract*, X. 191; Chronicle History of Perkin Warbeck, *Extract*, X. 207; Ladies' Trial, *Extract*, X. 211; Love's Sacrifice, *Extract*, X. 204; Love's Melancholy, *Extract*, 182
Ford, John, Wm. Rowley, etc., *Extracts*, IX. 350
Fortune by Land and Sea, *Extract*, IX. 280
Fountain, John, X. 376
Fragments, curious, III. 1
Free thoughts on several eminent composers, V. 135
Friend on his Marriage, lines to a, V. 142
Fuimus Troes, *Extract*, X. 363
Fuller, Thomas, Writings of, III. 142, 279-80, 319

GALLANTRY, Modern, I. 157
Game at Chess, the, IX. 312
Garrat, IV. 235, 299
Garrick Extracts, IV. 238, 302; X. 341
Gay, IV. 19
"Gem," contributions to the, IV. 247; V. 119
Genius, Sanity of true, II. 73
Genteel style in writing, II. 98
Gentle Giantess, the, IV. 116, 289
Gentleman of Venice, the, *Extract*, X. 240
Gentleman Usher, the, *Extract*, IX. 182
"Gentleman's Magazine," contributions to, III. 152; IV. 63
Gilpin, Mrs, riding to Edmonton, IV. 244, 302
Gipsy's Malison, the, V. 128, 410
Glapthorne, Henry, X. 374; Wit in a Constable, *Extract*, X. 265
Godwin, Mrs, III. 304; IV. 285, 286, 294; VI. xix
Godwin, William, III. 65, *et seq*, 286, 309
Godwin's "Faulkner," Prologue to, V. 370
Going into Breeches, VIII. 34
Going or Gone, V. 125, 409
Golden Age, the, *Extract*, IX. 250
Goldsmith, IV. 270
Gondibert, X. 49*n*
Good Clerk, the, IV. 55, 282
Good temper, VIII. 122
Gorboduc, *Extract*, IX. 5
Gould, Mrs T. *See* Burrel, Miss

Grace before meat, I. 185
Grandame, the, V. 59, 390
Great grandfather, the, VIII. 162
Green, Robert, *Extract* from, IX. 77, 359
Green's *Tu Quoque*, X. 148
Greville, Sir Fulke, Alaham, *Extract*, IX. 12, 357; Mustapha, *Extract*, IX. 24.
Grimaldi, III. 247
Guardian, the, *Extract*, X. 274
Guy Faux, IV. 129, 291
Guzman de Alfarache, *Extract*, IX. 348*n*

H——, Mr, a farce, V. 275
Harding, Samuel, *Extract* from, X. 266, 374
Hardy, R. W. H., lines addressed to, V. 131
Harlequin, the Mimic, VIII. 58
Harmony in Unlikeness, V. 131, 410
Hathaway, Mr, I. 32; IV. 70
Hawkins, IX. 86*n*
Hazlitt, II. 133, 269
Hectors, the, *Extract*, X. 272
Helen, V. 85, 400
Herbert family, X. 173*n*
Hertfordshire, Mackery End in, I. 148
Hester, V. 90, 401
Hey for Honesty, *Extract*, X. 276
Heywood, Thomas, I. 116*n*; IX. 99, 246*n*, 248*n*, 265*n*, 266*n*, 273*n*, 284*n*, 364; *Extracts* from—Brazen Age, IX. 254; Challenge for Beauty, IX. 267, 272; English Traveller, IX. 259; Fair Maid of the Exchange, IX. 246; Golden Age, IX. 250; Royal King and Loyal Subject, IX. 274; Silver Age, IX. 251; Woman killed with Kindness, IX. 238
Heywood, Thomas, and Richard Brome, Late Lancashire Witches, *Extract*, IX. 275, 279
Heywood, Thomas, and W. Rowley, Fortune by Land and Sea, *Extract*, IX. 280
History of Antonio and Mellida, *Extract*, IX. 206
Hodges, I. 29
Hoffman's Tragedy, IX. 104
Hogarth, Barry, on the genius of, III. 118-120; Coleridge on the style of, III. 117-118; genius and character of, III. 105, 316
Holiday children, IV. 98, 285
Home delights, VIII. 147
Hone, W., IV. 229, 296-297, 299
Honest Whore, the, IX. 234, 235
Hood, Thomas, IV. 302
Hoole, IV. 260
Hopkins, IX. 10*n*

Horace, reference to, IV. 41; IX. 142*n*
"Hospita" (signature of, Lamb), IV. 54
Hospita on Indulgence, IV. 50
Howard, I. 33*n*
Howard, Hon. James, X. 311, 375
Howard, Sir Robert, X. 357
Humble Petition of an Unfortunate Day, the, IV. 220, 297
Hunt, Thornton Leigh, lines to, V. 103, 404; ("Little T. H."), I. 134, 304-305
Huntingdon Divertisement, the, *Extract*, X. 323
Hymen's Triumph, IX. 124
Hypochondriacus, III. 9; V. 88, 401
Hypocrisy, Lamb on, III. 275-276

ILLUSTRIOUS DEFUNCT, the, IV. 157, 293
In Tabulam Eximii Pictoris, V. 110, 406
Inconvenience resulting from being hanged, IV. 11, 279
Incorrect speaking, VIII. 126
"Indicator," the, contributions to, I. 110, 115; III. 154, 179, 200; IV. 95, 98, 101, 104; X. 363
Indulgence, Hospita on, IV. 50
Infant dying as soon as born, Lines on, V. 119, 408
Insatiate Countess, the, *Extract*, IX. 219
Isaac Walton, IX. 107*n*

JACK DRUM's entertainment, IX. 113
James, Sarah, lines in the album of, V. 164
Jekyll, I. 171, 309
Jewish characteristics, I. 120-122
John Murray's Street, I. 142, 306
"John Woodvil" volume, III. 293
Johnson, Benjamin, IV. 165; IX. 86*n*, 142*n*, 234*n*, 266, 284*n*, 362; *Extracts* from—Alchemist, IX. 154; Case is Altered, IX. 129; Catiline his Conspiracy, IX. 162; New Inn, IX. 165; Poetaster, IX. 132; Sad Shepherd, IX. 171; Sejanus his Fall, IX. 142; Volpone, IX. 144
Johnson, Dr, IV. 166
Johnson, Samuel (the Whig), III. 270-271
Jones, John, X. 257, 373
Jordan, Mrs, I. 264; III. 48, 50
Journey from School, and to School, VIII. 67
Jude Judkins, Esq., Reminiscences of, IV. 201, 296

KEAN, Edmund, III. 55, 59, 60-61, 307
Keats, John, Essay on the poems of, III. 191; "Lamia" by, review of, III. 326
Kelly, Miss Frances, II. 265-266; III. xvi-xix, 300-302, 306-307; Lamb's criticism of, III. 41, 50-52, 54, 56, 57, 58; Bath, at, III. 302; sonnet to, V. 105, 404

Kemble, John, I. 290; III. 65 *et seq.*; V. 423; Godwin's Antonio, and, III. 65, 309
Knowles, J. Sheridan, Sonnet to, V. iii, 407; "The Wife," Prologue to, V. 377; Epilogue to, V. 378
Kenney, James, Epilogue to "Debtor and Creditor" of, V. 374
Killigrew, Henry, *Extracts* from, X. 260, 348, 354, 356, 374
Killigrew, Sir Richard, X. 376
King and Queen of Hearts, VIII. 183
King David and Fair Bethsabe, IX. 71, 73
King John and Matilda, X. 282
Kirke, John, *Extracts* from, X. 258, 374
Kyd, Spanish Tragedy, *Extract*, IX. 79

Lacy, X. 345
Ladies' Trial, *Extract*, X. 211
Lady of Pleasure, *Extract*, X. 237
Lamb, Charles—Antiquity, on, I. 16; Character of, I. 19, 299; II. xlvi *et seq.*, lxii, lxxviii; Christ's Hospital, at, II. xvii-xxii; Death of, II. lxxvi; Drury Lane, failure of farce at, II. lii; Edmonton, the home in, II. lxxii *et seq.*; Elia essays collected by, I. xv; Home troubles of, II. xxii *et seq.*, xxx-xxxi; India House, released from, II. lxix; Islington, at, II. lxvii-lxviii; Jewish Characteristics, on, I. 120-122; Madness, fight against, II. xxvi-xxvii; Mary's collaboration with, VIII. xiii *et seq.* Memoir of, by Wm. Macdonald, II. xiii-xcii; Migrations of, II. lxv-lxx; Popularity of, II. lx; Preface to Last Essays by, II. 1; Preface to Selections, IX. 1; Quaker Characteristics, on, I. 88, 122-128, 302*n*; Reference to Literature, *see under* various names; Scottish Character, on, I. 117-120; Silence, on, I. 90; Temple, early days in, II. xiv-xvii; Versatility of, in Literature, IX. xx *et seq.*
Lamb, Hetty, I. 139, 305; II. xv
Lamb, John, I. 176-177, 309; II. xiv; Sonnet to, V. 106
Lamb, John (the younger), II. xvi, xxii
Lamb, Mary—Character of, II. xvi, xxxii-xxxiii; Charles, care for, II. xxviii-xxxi; Collaboration with Charles, VIII. xiii *et seq.*; Edmonton, life at, II. lxxii *et seq.*; Filial devotion of, II. xxiii-xxiv; Insanity of, II. xxiv *et seq.*; Sarah Stoddart, correspondence with, VI. xiii-xvii; Solitude of, on death of Charles, II. lxxvii; Sonnet to, V. 67, 392; Temple, life in, VI. xi *et seq.*
Lame Brother, the, VIII. 32
"Lamia," by Keats, Essay on, III. 191; review of, III. 326
Last Essays of Elia, Vol. II.
Last Peach, the, IV. 192, 295
Late Lancashire Witches, the, *Extract*, IX. 275, 279

Lawton, Cecilia, lines in the album of, V. 162
Le Grice, Charles Valentine, I. 43, 193, 299
Le Grice, Samuel, I. 43-44, 299
Lear, Mr Cooke as, III. 15
Leisure, V. 113
Lely, IV. 65
"Lepus" (signature of Lamb), IV. 178, 181, 184, 197
"Lepus Papers," IV. 294
"Letter to an Old Gentleman," IV. 140, 291
Lingua, IX. 115
Linley, Maria, I. 196
Liston, John, Biographical Memoir of, III. 73, 311
Living without God in the World, V. 80, 397
Lloyd, Charles, Essay on Poems of, III. 185; lines to, V. 70, 76, 394, 396; "Nugae Canorae" by, III. 324
Lloyd, Robert, III. 152-3, 279, 320
Locke, Sarah, lines in the album of, V. 166
Lodge, Thomas, Extract from, X. 350
Lodge, Thomas, and Robert Greene, A Looking-Glass for England and London, *Extract*, IX. 77, 359
London Chanticleers, X. 290
London Fogs, IV. 246, 302
"London Magazine," contributions to, I. 1, 13, 23, 45, 54, 64, 74, 83, 88, 97, 115, 129, 139, 148, 157, 166, 185, 195, 201, 209, 217, 228, 241, 253, 263, 281, 292; II. 1, 5, 14, 25, 42, 53, 66, 78, 86, 105, 113, 119, 126, 165, 172, 182, 186, 195; III. 62, 65-70, 73, 83, 210, 221; IV. 1, 107, 112, 114, 116, 120, 129, 140, 150, 167, 185, 192, 255; V. 83, 98
Londoner, the, IV. 7, 279
Looking-Glass for England and London, *Extract*, IX. 77
Lottery System, the, IV. 158-166
Louisa M——, lines to, V. 140
Love, Death, and Reputation, III. 97
Love Tricks, *Extract*, X. 212
Lovekin, Philonax, X. 376; Andronicus, *Extract*, X. 292
Lovel. *See* Lamb, John
Lover, the, V. 83, 399
Lover's Melancholy, The, X. 182
Love's Dominion, X. 278
Love's Metamorphosis, *Extract*, IX. 41
Love's Pilgrimage, X. 140
Love's Sacrifice, X. 204
Lyceum, Newspapers at the, III. 305
Lyly, M.A., John, Love's Metamorphosis, *Extract*, IX. 41; Sapho and Phao, *Extract*, IX. 37, 358
Lust's Dominion, IX. 106

M—— (Marshall), III. 66-7, 69, 310
Mackery End in Hertfordshire, I. 148

Magpie's Nest, the, VIII. 88
Mahometan, the Young (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 59
Maid Marian and Robin Hood, IV. 238, 302
Maid's Revenge, the, *Extract*, X. 214
Maid's Tragedy, the, X. 73
Malcontent, the, X. 214
Mamamouchi, X. 314
Man, the Superannuated, II. 86
Manning ("My Friend M."), I. 98, 303, 312; III. 278, 279, 293; VI. xiii, xvii
Manuche, Cosmo, X. 375; The Bastard, *Extract*, X. 277
Many Friends, IV. 173, 294
"Marcian Colonna" (Barry Cornwall), Essay on, III. 195; Review of, III. 327
Marlowe, Christopher, IX. 52*n*, 55*n*, 65*n*, 70*n*, 99*n*, 107*n*, 273*n*; Doctor Faustus, *Extract*, IX. 43; Edward the Second, *Extract*, IX. 56; Rich Jew of Malta, *Extract*, IX. 53, 358; Tamburlaine the Great, IX. 41, 358
Married Beau, the, X. 335
Married People, Bachelor's Complaint of Manners of, I. 253
Marston, John, IX. 234*n*, 256*n*, 363; Antonio's Revenge, *Extract*, IX. 209; Fawn, the, *Extract*, IX. 215; History of Antonio and Mellida, IX. 206; Insatiable Countess, *Extract*, IX. 219; Malcontent, *Extract*, IX. 214; What you Will, *Extract*, IX. 217; Wonder of Women, *Extract*, IX. 215
Marvell, quoted, I. 169
Massinger, Philip, IV. 165; V. 52; IX. 99*n*, 320*n*, 365; X. 144*n*, 169*n*, 172, 179*n*, 371, 372; City Madam, *Extract*, X. 169; New Way to Pay Old Debts, *Extract*, X. 163; Parliament of Love, *Extract*, X. 160; Picture, the, *Extract*, X. 166; Unnatural Combat, *Extract*, X. 157; Very Woman, a, X. 179
Massinger, Philip, and Nathaniel Field, Fatal Dowry, *Extract*, X. 174
Massinger, Philip, and Thomas Decker, Virgin Martyr, *Extract*, X. 177
Massinger, Philip, and Thomas Middleton, etc., The Old Law, *Extract*, IX. 313
Melancholy of Tailors, Essay on the, IV. 81, 283
Memory, VIII. 60
Men, Women, and the Monkeys, VIII. 96
Merchant's Daughter (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 91
Merry Devil of Edmonton, *Extract*, IX. 116
Metropolis, Decay of Beggars in, I. 228
Middleton, Thomas, IX. 302*n*, 320, 334*n*, 353*n*, 364-365; X. 346, 348-349; Blurt, Master Constable, *Extract*, IX. 285; Chaste Maid in Cheapside, *Extract*, IX. 289; Game at Chess, *Extract*, IX. 312; More Dissemblers besides Women, *Extract*, IX. 309; No Wit like a

Woman's, *Extract*, IX. 287 ; Witch, *Extract*, IX. 292 ; Women beware Women, *Extract*, IX. 303
Middleton, Thomas, and William Rowley, Fair Quarrel, *Extract*, IX. 321
Middleton, Thomas, and Philip Massinger, etc., The Old Law, *Extract*, IX. 313
Middleton, Thomas Fanshaw, I. 42, 299-300
Midnight, lines composed at, V. 77, 397
Milton, blindness of, III. 281 ; reference to, I. 102, 188-189 ; IV. 21, 84, 224 ; IX. 53*n*, 99*n*, 198*n*, 209*n* ; X. 203*n*, 365*n* ; style of, 282-283
Moderation in Diet, VIII. 123
Modern Art, barrenness of the imaginative faculty in the production of, II. 148
Montague, Basil, I. 19, 299
Months, the, IV. 229, 299
Monument, lines for a, V. 138
More Dissemblers besides Women, *Extract*, IX. 309
More, Sir Thomas, Essay, III. 200 ; specimens from the writings of, III. 328
Morgan, Louisa, Sonnet to, V. 131, 411
"Moriturus" (signature of Lamb), IV. 40
"Morning Chronicle," contribution to, V. 107
"Morning Post," contribution to, III. 11, 15
Mortifications of an Author, III. 241, 333
Motes in the Sunbeams, VIII. 20
Moxon, II. lxx-lxxi ; V. 54, 420, 421 ; Sonnets of, Essay on, III. 262 ; review of, III. 336
"Mrs B.," IV. 204, 285
Mrs Battle's Opinions on Whist, I. 64
Mrs Leicester's School, VII.
Munday, Anthony, and Henry Chettle, Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon, *Extract*, IX. 100
Munden, Autobiography of, III. 83, 311 ; Essay on the acting of, I. 292 ; Essay on the Death of, III. 95, 314
Mustapha, *Extract*, IX. 24
My Birthday, VIII. 130
My First Play, I. 195
My Friend the Indicator, Sonnet to, V. 112, 407
My Relations, I. 139

NABBES, THOMAS, X. 374 ; Bride, the, *Extract*, X. 263 ; Tottenham Court, *Extract*, X. 261
Name, the Family, Sonnet on, V. 105
Naylor, James, Quaker, I. 91
Neatness in Apparel, VIII. 18
Needlework, Essay on, IV. 87, 284
"Nepos" (signature of Lamb), IV. 251
New-born Infant, the, VIII. 19
New Inn, the, *Extract*, IX. 165

"New Monthly Magazine," contributions to, II. 73, 98, 208; III. 87, 264; IV. 157, 198, 201
New River, the, II. 268
"New Times," contributions to, III. 60, 191, 195, 237, 244, 246; IV. 173, 179, 182, 195; V. 115
New Way to Pay Old Debts, *Extract*, X. 163
New Wonder, a, *Extract*, IX. 341
New Year, the, lines on, I. 61
New Year's Eve, I. 54
New Year's Coming of Age, II. 165
Newcastle, Duke of, X. 342-3; Triumphant Widow, *Extract*, X. 316
Newcastle, Margaret, I. 149, 229
Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago, II. 136
No Wit like a Woman's, IX. 287
Nonsense Verses, V. 134, 412
Norris, Randall, II. 264; IV. 263, 304-5
Norton, Thomas, and Thomas Sackville, Gorboduc, *Extract*, IX. 5
Novello, Clara, lines to, V. 145, 413
Novello, Vincent, I. 81, 301
Nugae Canorae, III. 185, 324
Nurse Green, VIII. 120
Nursing, VIII. 37

Odes and Addresses to Great People, Essay on, III. 246; Review of, III. 334
Offer, the, VIII. 114
Old China, II. 186
Old Law, the, *Extract*, IX. 313
Old Maids, IV. 101, 285
Old Margate Hoy, the, II. 53
On a Picture of the Finding of Moses, VIII. 169
One Dip, V. 132, 411
Orange, the, VIII. 70
Orkney, Catherine, lines in the Album of, V. 158
Otway, IX. 99*n*
Ovid, IV. 110; IX. 142*n*; 248*n*
Oxford in the Vacation, I. 13

Paice, Joseph, I. 160-163, 308
Palmer, Jack, I. 196, 275, 287-9
Parental Recollections, VIII. 10
Parish Beadle, IV. 127, 289
Parliament of Bees, *Extract*, X. 267, 270
Parliament of Love, *Extract*, X. 160
Pawnbroker's Daughter, V. 339
Payne, Nevil, X. 376; Fatal Jealousy, *Extract*, X. 309
Peach, the, VIII. 7
Peele, George, Arraignment of Paris, *Extract*, IX. 65, 358;

Battle of Alcazar, *Extract*, IX. 70; Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe, IX. 71, 73
Penn, I. 91, 127
Pennant, I. 5
Penny Pieces, VIII. 139
"Pensilis" (signature of Lamb), IV. 22
Perry, I. 30; IV. 70, 73
Petruchio, IX. 265*n*
Philaster, *Extract*, X. 62
Phillips, Ambrose, X. 183*n*
Phyllis of Scyros, *Extract*, X. 280
Picture, the, X. 166
Pierson, Peter, I. 178
Pierson, Susan, I. 175, 309
Play-house Memoranda, III. 43
Plays, V. 227-367
Pliny, IV. 48
Plumer, Walter, I. 69
Plumers of Hertfordshire, I. 298
Poetry for Children, Vol. VIII.
Poetaster, IX. 132
Politician, the, X. 243
"Pompey" (signature of Lamb), IV. 214
Poor Relations, II. 14
Pope, IV. 19, 41, 165, 267; X. 88*n*, 363
Popular Fallacies, II. 208
Popular Fallacy, a, IV. 198, 295
Porter, Henry, IX. 360; Two Angry Women, *Extract*, IX. 96
Powell, Mrs, I. 265
Presents of Game, Thoughts on, IV. 252
Prestwich, Edmund, X. 359, 374; Hectors, *Extract*, X. 272
Prince Dorus, VIII. 201
Prior, IV. 19
Proctor (Barry Cornwall), Sonnet to, V. iii, 407
Prologues and Epilogues, V. 368-379
Prynne, IV. 188
Puns, II. 220-221

QUAKER CHARACTERISTICS, Lamb on, I. 122-128; IV. 170-1
Quaker's Meeting, Essay on, I. 88
Quarles, Francis, X. 374; Virgin Widow, *Extract*, X. 274
"Quarterly," contribution to the, III. 156
Queen Oriana's Dream, VIII. 167
Querer por solo querer, *Extract*, X. 299
Quillinan, Rotha, lines in the album of, V. 156

RAINBOW, THE, VIII. 140

Ram Alley, *Extract*, IX. 122
Randolph, Thomas, X. 375; Hey for Honesty, *Extract*, X. 276
Ravenscourt, Edward, X. 376; Mamamouchi, *Extract*, X. 314
Rawlins, T. X. 374; Rebellion, *Extract*, X. 265
Read, I. 178-9
Readers against the grain, III. 237, 333
Reading, Detached Thoughts on Books and, II. 42
Reaper's Child, the, VIII. 3
Reflections in the Pillory, IV. 185, 294
"Reflector," contributions to, I. 253; III. 17, 97, 105, 142; IV. 7, 11, 23, 32, 34, 41, 50, 55; V. 94
Rejoicings upon the New Year's Coming of Age, II. 165
"Religio Medici," IX. 212
Religion of Actors, III. 87
Remarkable Correspondent, IV. 210, 296
Remarks on a Friend's MS., III. 288
Reminiscence of Sir Jeffery Dunstan, IV. 235, 299
"Remorse," Coleridge's, Prologue to, V. 373
Repentance and Reconciliation, VIII. 16
Reproof, The, VIII. 62
Reynolds Gallery, the, III. 130, 317
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, III. 109, 111, 112, 113*n*
Revenger's Tragedy, the, *Extract*, X. 47
Rewards of Virtue, The, *Extract*, X. 293
Rich Jew of Malta, *Extract*, IX. 53
Richards, I. 42
Richardson, IX. 53*n*
Rickman, IV. 278
Ride, the, VIII. 4
Rider, William, X. 375; The Twins, *Extract*, X. 279
Ritson *versus* John Scott, III. 210, 328
Rivers, X. 233
Rochester, IX. 53*n*
Rogers, Samuel, Sonnets to, V. 130, 143, 413
Rook and the Sparrow, VIII. 12
Rosamund Gray, V. 1, 283
Rowe, IX. 99*n*, 259*n*
Rowley, William, IX. 320*n*, 334*n*, 364*n*, 365; X. 352, 355; All's Lost by Lust, *Extract*, IX. 335; New Wonder, *Extract*, IX. 341
Rowley, William, and Thomas Decker, etc., Witch of Edmonton, *Extract*, IX. 350
Rowley, William, and Heywood, Fortune by Land and Sea, *Extract*, IX. 280
Rowley, William, and Philip Massinger, etc., Old Law, *Extract*, IX. 313
Rowley, William, and Middleton, A Fair Quarrel, *Extract*, IX. 321

Royal Academician, Recollections of a late, III. 133, 319
Royal King and Loyal Subject, *Extract*, IX. 274

SABBATH BELLS, the, V. 61
Sackville, Thomas, and Thomas Norton, Gorboduc, *Extract*, IX. 5, 357
Sad Shepherd, the, *Extract*, IX. 171
Sailor Uncle (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 7
Saint Crispin to Mr Gifford, V. 109, 406
Salome, V. 100, 404
Salt, Samuel, I. 171-5, 182-3, 297, 307, 309; II. xiv, xvii, xxii
Sanity of True Genius, II. 73
Sapho and Phao, *Extract*, IX. 37
Satan in Search of a Wife, V. 209-223, 421
Satiro-Mastix, *Extract*, IX. 229, 234
Saturday Night, IV. 247, 303
Schoolmaster, The Old and the New, I. 97
Scott, John, III. 210 *et seq.*
Scottish Character, by Lamb, I. 117-120
Sea Voyage, the (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 105
Sedley, IX. 53
Sejanus, his Fall, *Extract*, IX. 142
Self-Enchanted, the, V. 140, 413
"Sempronia" (signature of Mary Lamb), IV. 94
Seneca, IX. 36*n*, 248
Seven Champions of Christendom, *Extract*, X. 258
Shaftesbury, Lord, II. 98, 265
Shakespeare, Essay on the Tragedies of, III. 17
Shakespeare, Lamb's reference to, IV. 19, 20, 84; IX. 37*n*, 55*n*, 65*n*, 91*n*, 98*n*, 99*n*, 106*n*, 108*n*, 116, 120*n*, 198*n*, 208*n*, 214*n*, 218*n*, 229*n*, 233*n*, 246*n*, 249*n*, 273*n*, 284*n*, 302*n*, 353*n*; X. 16*n*, 46*n*, 59*n*, 102*n*, 115*n*, 125*n*, 136*n*, 149*n*, 184*n*, 245*n*, 268*n*, 283*n*, 285*n*, 286*n*, 302*n*
Shakespeare, Tales from—All's Well that ends Well, VI. 157; As You Like It, VI. 60; Comedy of Errors, VI. 185; Cymbeline, VI. 110; Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, VI. 273; King Lear, VI. 126; Macbeth, VI. 144; Measure for Measure, VI. 202; Merchant of Venice, VI. 194; Midsummer Night's Dream, VI. 18; Much Ado About Nothing. VI. 45; Othello, VI. 292; Pericles, Prince of Tyre, VI. 308; Romeo and Juliet, VI. 252; Taming of the Shrew, VI. 172; Tempest, the, VI. 5; Timon of Athens, VI. 236; Twelfth Night, VI. 220; Two Gentlemen of Verona, VI. 79; Winter's Tale, VI. 32
Shakespeare's Improvers, Essay, III. 91, 313
She is going, V. 133, 412

Sherburne, Sir Edward, X. 375; Phyllis of Scyros, *Extract*, X. 280
Sheridan, I. 196
Shirley, James, IX. 362, 212*n*, 272*n*; X. 346, 347, 351, 372; The Brothers, *Extract*, X. 225; Changes, *Extract*, X. 234; Example, the, *Extract*, X. 235; Gentlemen of Venice, *Extract*, X. 240; Lady of Pleasure, *Extract*, X. 237; Love Tricks, *Extract*, X. 212; Maid's Revenge, *Extract*, X. 214; Politician, *Extract*, X. 243; Traitor, *Extract*, X. 233
Shirley, James, and George Chapman, Tragedy of Philip Chabot, *Extract*, IX. 199, 205
Sicily and Naples, *Extract*, X. 266
Siddons, Henry, Epilogue to farce of, V. 371
Siddons, Mrs, Sonnet to, V. 55, 386
Sidney, Sir Philip, IX. 10*n*, 229; X. 46*n*, 77*n*; Some Sonnets of, Essay, II. 126
Silence, Lamb on, I. 90
Sir Giles Goosecap, *Extract*, IX. 114
Sisters, the, V. 168
Sister's Expostulation, VIII. 115
Smollett, I. 120
Sonnets, V. 55-9, 386-396
Southey, Edith, lines in the Album of, V. 156
Southey, Robert, III. 221, 328
South-Sea House, I. 1, 297
Spanish Tragedy, *Extract*, IX. 79
Sparrow and the Hen, VIII. 98
Spartan Boy, the, VIII. 165
"Spectator," contribution to, III. 91, 253
Spenser, I. 166; II. 224; IV. 220; IX. 131
Spring, the First Leaf of, V. 141, 413
Squirrels, IV. 227, 299
Stage Illusion, II. 25
Steevens, Mr, X. 136*n*
Sternhold, IX. 10*n*
Stevens, Lancelot Pepys, I. 41-2
Stoddart, Sarah, VI. xiii-xvii
Stories for Children, VII.
Stothard, V. 143, 413
Strode, Rev. W., X. 346, 373; Floating Island, *Extract*, X. 258
Stuart, Dan, II. 136-7, 270; III. 293
Suett, Dicky, I. 273-5
Summer Friends, V. 102, 404
Superannuated Man, the, II. 86
"Supersurus" (signature of Lamb), IV. 194
Swans in Kensington Gardens, V. 106
Swift, I. 119*n*; IV. 19, 234

TABLE BOOK, the, contributions to, IV. 238, 244, 263, 266, 305; V. 125; IX. 4; X. 340
Tailor, Robert, X. 371; Hog hath lost his pearl, *Extract*, X. 149
Tamburlaine the Great, *Extract*, IX. 41
Tame, Thomas, I. 6
Tancred and Gismund, *Extract*, IX. 10
Tate Nahum, X. 377; Brutus of Alba, X. 319
"Tempest," Essay on a passage in the, III. 70, 310
Temple, Sir William, II. 98-103, 265
Temple, the Inner, I. 166-70
Terry, Daniel, III. 313
Tethys' Festival, *Extract*, IX. 123
Text, the, VIII. 39
Theatres, Essay on the custom of Hissing at, III. 97, 315
Theatrical Notices—Mr Keane as Hamlet, III. 60; Miss Burrell as Don Giovanni, III. 47-49; Miss Kelly at Bath, III. 49; New Pieces at the Lyceum, III. 57; "The Hypocrite," III. 54; "The Jovial Crew," III. 53
Thierry and Theodoret, *Extract*, X. 110
Thomas, Sarah, lines in the album of, V. 160
Thornton, I. 42
Thoughtless Cruelty, VIII. 136
Thoughts on presents of game, IV. 252, 303
Three Friends, the, VIII. 75
Thurlow, Lord, poetry of, III. 284
Thyestes, X. 327
Time spent in dress, VIII. 154
Time's a Tell-Tale, Epilogue to, V. 371
Tip, John, I. 7
'Tis Pity she's a Whore, *Extract*, X. 184
To a London Steeple, V. xxii
To a river in which a child was drowned, VIII. 26
To a Young Lady, VIII. 152
Tobacco, a Farewell to, V. 94, 402
Tobin, I. 29; II. 49, 262
Tom Pry, IV. 179, 294
Tom Pry's Wife, IV. 182, 294
Tomb of Douglas, the, V. 68, 394
Tombs in the Abbey, II. 113
Tomkis, Thomas, IX. 361; Lingua, *Extract*, X. 115
Tottenham Court, X. 261
Tourneur, Cyril, X. 169*n*, 369; Atheist's Tragedy, *Extract*, X. 44; Revenger's Tragedy, *Extract*, X. 47
Towers, Mrs Jane, V. 153
Tradesman, the Complete English, IV. 58
Tragedy of Nero, *Extract*, X. 181
Tragedy of Philip Chabot, *Extract*, IX. 199, 205
Traitor, the, *Extract*, X. 233

Translations of the Poems of Vincent Bourne, V. 170-187, 415
Translations, other, V. 188-194
Treadmill, Pindaric Ode to, V. 115, 408
Triumph of Love, *Extract*, X. 88
Triumphant Widow, *Extract*, X. 316
Trollope, Dr, I. 41-42, 229
True Story, a, IV. 95, 284
True Trojans, the, *Extract*, X. 255
Twins, the, *Extract*, X. 279
Two Angry Women of Abingdon, *Extract*, IX. 96
Two Boys, the, VIII. 112
Two Bees, the, VIII. 64
Two Noble Kinsmen, the, *Extract*, X. 125
Two Races of Men, I. 45
Two Tragedies in One, *Extract*, IX. 99*n*
Twopenny (Bencher), I. 178-179, 309

Un Solitaire, V. 167
Undertaker, Character of an, IV. 38, 280
Unitarian Protests, IV. 167, 293
Unnatural Combat, *Extract*, X. 157
Upton, William, IV. 304

Valentine's Day, I. 110
Vanbrugh, X. 240*n*
Verses, Political, V. 195, 202
Virgil, IV. 81, 156; IX. 142*n*; X. 303*n*
Virgin Martyr, *Extract*, X. 177
Virgin Widow, *Extract*, X. 274
Vision of Horns, IV. 150, 292
Vision of Repentance, V. 64, 391
Visit to the Cousins (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 69-81
Volpone, IX. 144
Voltaire, IV. 267

W———, Margaret, lines to, V. 146, 413
Wales, Wm., IV. 77
Waltham Cross, lines suggested by a sight of, V. 125, 409
Walton's Lives, *Extract*, X. 71*n*
Wasps in a Garden, VIII. 51
Watson, IX. 248*n*
Webster, John, IX. 86*n*, 99*n*, 198*n*, 363; X. 169*n*, 369; Appius and Virginia, *Extract*, X. 17; Devil's Law Case, *Extract*, X. 36, 40; Duchess of Malfy, *Extract*, X. 21; White Devil, *Extract*, X. 1
Webster, John, and Thomas Decker, Westward Hoe, *Extract*, IX. 237
Wedding, the, II. 172
Weeding, VIII. 108

Westwood, Miss, lines in the album of, V. 123-124
Westward Hoe, *Extract*, IX. 237
What is fancy?, VII. 53
What you will, *Extract*, IX. 217
Which is the favourite? VIII. 100
Whist, Mrs Battle's opinions on, I. 64
White Devil, *Extract*, XI.
White, Jem, I. 225-7, 311; III. 323
Why not do it, Sir, to-day? VIII. 146
"Wife," by Sheridan Knowles, Prologue to, V. 377; Epilogue to, V. 378
Wife's Trial, the, V. 307
Wilde, Mrs Sergeant, lines in the album of, V. 148
Wilmot, Thomas, etc., Tancred and Gismund, *Extract*, IX. 10, 357
Wilson, John, X. 377; Belphegor, *Extract*, X. 335
Winstanley, Miss Susan, I. 163-5
Wisdom, Robert, IX. 10*n*
Wissett, IV. 259
Wit in a Constable, *Extract*, X. 265
Wit without Money, X. 107
Witch, the, *Extract*, IX. 292
Witch of Edmonton, *Extract*, IX. 350
Witch, the, Dramatic Sketch, V. 273-4
Witch Aunt, the (Mrs Leicester's School), VII. 82
Witches and other Night Fears, I. 129
Wither, George, Essay on the Poetical Works of, III. 172-8, 322
W. M., The Huntingdon Divertisement, *Extract*, X. 323
W——n, Alice, I. 56, 60, 75, 207, 210; II. xxv.
Woman killed with Kindness, a, *Extract*, IX. 238
Woman's a Weathercock, *Extract*, X. 144
Women, beware Women! *Extract*, IX. 303
Wonder of Women, the, *Extract*, IX. 215
Woodroffe, IV. 259
Woolley, Hannah, IV. 229
Woolman, John, I. 92, 302
Wordsworth, Dorothy, lines in the album of, V. 157
Wordsworth, William, III. 156 *et seq.*; IV. 279, 283; VI. xv, xvii
Wordsworth's Excursion: A Review, III. 156, 321
Work, lines on, V. 108, 406
"Works" (1818), III. 293; V. 51
Woodvil, John, V. 227-272, 423
Woodvil in Battle, V. 84, 400
Writing, The Genteel Style in, II. 98
Written a Year after the "Events," V. 73, 396
Written in the first leaf of a Child's Memorandum-Book, VIII. 59
Written on the day of my Aunt's Funeral, V. 72, 395

Written soon after the preceding Poem, V. 75, 396
Wycherley, Comedies of, I. 283 *et seq.*

YARRINGTON, ROBERT, IX. 360; Two Tragedies, *Extract*, IX. 99
Young Friend, lines to a, V. 136, 412
Young Lady, lines to a, V. 71
Young Letter-writer, the, VIII. 73

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